THE

PCETICAL WORKS

OF

RICHARD SAVAGE.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING HIS

EPISTLES.

O'er ample Nature I extend my views;
Nature to rural scenes invites the Muse:
She flies all public care, all venal strife,
To try the still compar'd with active life;
To prove by these the sons of men may owe
The fruits of bliss to bursting clouds of woe;
That ev'n Calamity, by thought refin'd,
Inspirits and adorns the thinking mind.

WANDERER.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR JOHN BELL, BOOKSELLER YO HIS
ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE PRINCE OF WALLS.
1791.

845

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

THE POETICAL WORKS OF RICHARD SAVAGE.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

-------------No Mother's care
Shielded my infant innocence with prayer;
No Father's guardian hand my youth maintain'd,
Call'd forth my virtues, or from vice restrain'd. BASTARD.

Why were my studious hours oppos'd by need?
In me did poverty from guilt proceed?---
Did I sooth vice, or venal strokes betray
In the low-purpos'd loud polemic fray?
Did e'er my verse immodest warmth contain?
Or, once licentious, heav'nly truths profane?
Never--------- WANDERER.

VOL. I.

LONLON.

PRINTED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF J. BELL,
BRITISH LIBRARY, STRAND,
BOOKSLLER TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
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1791.

THE LIFE OF

RICHARD SAVAGE.

It has been observed in all ages, that the advantages of nature or of fortune have contributed very little to the promotion of happiness; and that those whom the splendour of their rank, or the extent of their capacity, have placed upon the summits of human life have not often given any just occasion to envy in those who look up to them from a lower station. Whether it be that apparent superiority incites great designs, and great designs are naturally liable to fatal miscarriages, or that the general lot of mankind is misery, and the misfortunes of those whose eminence drew upon them an universal attention have been more carefully recorded, because they were more generally observed, and have in reality been only more conspicuous than those of others, not more frequent or more severe.

That affluence and power, advantages extrinsic and adventitious, and therefore easily separable from those by whom they are possessed, should very often flatter the mind with expectations of felicity which they cannot give, raises no astonishment; but it seems rational to hope that intellectual greatness should produce better effects; that minds qualified for great attainments should first endeavour their own benefit; and that they who are most able to teach others the

way to happiness should with most certainty follow it themselves.

But this expectation, however plausible, has been very frequently disappointed. The heroes of literary as well as civil history have been very often no less remarkable for what they have suffered than for what they have achieved; and volumes have been written only to enumerate the miseries of the learned, and relate their unhappy lives and untimely deaths.

To these mournful narratives I am about to add The Life of Richard Savage, a man whose Writings entitle him to an eminant rank in the classes of learning, and whose misfortunes claim a degree of compassion not always due to the unhappy, as they were often the consequences of the crimes of others rather than his own.

In the year 1697 Anne Countess of Macclesfield, having lived for some time upon very uneasy terms with her husband, thought a public confession of adultery the most obvious and expeditious method of obtaining her liberty, and therefore declared that the child that which she was then great was begotten by the Earl Rivers. This, as may be easily imagined, made her husband no less desirous of a separation than herself, and he prosecuted his design in the most effectual manner; for he applied not to the ecclesiastical courts for a divorce, but to the parliament for an act, by which his marriage might be dissolved, the nuptial contract totally annulled, and the children of his

wife illegitimated. This act, after the usual deliberation, he obtained, though without the approbation of some who considered marriage as an affair only cognizable by ecclesiastical judges; and on March 3d was separated from his wife, whose fortune, which was very great, was repaid her; and who having, as well as her husband, the liberty of making another choice, was in a short time married to Colonel Brett.

While the Earl of Macclesfield was prosecuting this affair, his wife was, on the 10th of January 1697-8, delivered of a son, and the Earl Rivers, by appearing to consider him his own, left none any reason to doubt of the sincerity of her declaration; for he was his godfather, and gave him his own name, which was by his direction inserted in the register of St. Andrew's parish in Holborn, but unfortunately left him to the care of his mother, whom, as she was now set free from her husband, he probably imagined likely to treat with great tenderness the child that had contributed to so pleasing an event. It is not indeed easy to discover what motives could be found to overbalance that natural affection of a parent, or what interest could be promoted by neglect or cruelty. The dread of shame or of poverty, by which some wretches have been incited to abandon or to murder their children, cannot be supposed to have affected a woman who had proclaimed her crime, and solicited reproach, and on whom the clemency of the legislature had undeservedly bestowed a fortune, which would have

been very little diminished by the expences which the care of her child could have brought upon her. It was therefore not likely that she would be wicked without temptation; that she would look upon her son from his birth with a kind of resentment and abhorrence, and instead of supporting, assisting, and defending him, delight to see him struggling with misery; or that she would take every opportunity of aggravating his misfortunes, and obstructing his resources, and with an implacable and restless cruelty continue her persecution from the first hour of his life to the last.

But whatever were her motives, no sooner was her son born than she discovered a resolution of disowning him; and in a very short time removed him from her sight, by commiting him to the care of a poor woman, whom she directed to educate him as her own, and enjoined never to inform him of his true parents.

Such was the beginning of the life of Richard Savage: born with a legal claim to honour and to affluence, he was in two months illegitimated by the parliament, and disowned by his mother, doomed to poverty and obscurity, and launched upon the ocean of life only that he might be swallowed by its quicksands, or dashed upon its rocks.

His mother could not indeed infect others with the same cruelty. As it was impossible to avoid the enquiries which the curiosity or tenderness of her re-

lations made after her child, she was obliged to give some account of the measures that she had taken; her mother, the Lady Mason, whether in approbation of her design, or to prevent more criminal contrivances, engaged to transact with the nurse, to pay her for her care, and to superintend the education of the child.

In this charitable office she was assisted by his godmother Mrs. Lloyd, who, while she lived, always looked upon him with that tenderness which the barbarity of his mother made peculiarly necessary; but her death, which happened in his tenth year was another of the misfortunes of his childhood; for though she kindly endeavoured to alleviate his loss by a legacy of three hundred pounds, yet as he had none to prosecute his claim, to shelter him from oppression, or call in law to the assistance of justice, her will was eluded by the executors and no part of the money was ever paid.

He was, however, not yet wholly abandoned: the Lady Mason still continued her care, and directed him to be placed at a small grammar-school near St. Alban's, where he was called by the name of his nurse, without the least intimation that he had a claim to any other.

Here he was initiated in literature, and passsed through several of the classes, with what rapidity or what applause cannot now be known. As he always spoke with respect of his master, it is probable that

the mean rank in which he then appeared did not hinder his genius from being distinguished, or his industry from being rewarded; and if in so low a state he obtained distinction and rewards, it is not likely that they were gained but by genius and industry.

It is very reasonable to conjecture that his application was equal to his abilities, because his improvement was more than proportioned to the opportunities which he enjoyed; nor can it be doubted that if his earliest productions had been preserved, like those of happier students, we might in some have found vigorous sallies of that sprightly humour which distinguishes The Author to be Let, and in others strong touches of that ardent imagination which painted the solemn scenes of The Wanderer.

While he was thus cultivating his genius, his father, the Earl Rivers, was seized with a distemper which in a short time put an end to his life. He had frequently inquired after his son, and had always been amused with fallacious and evasive answers; but being now in his own opinion on his deathbed, he thought it his duty to provide for him among his other natural children, and therefore demanded a positive account of him, with an importunity not to be diverted or denied. His mother, who could no longer refuse an answer, determined at least to give such as should cut him off for ever from that happiness which competence affords, and therefore declared that he was

dead; which is perhaps the first instance of a lie invented by a mother to deprive her son of a provision, which was designed him by another, and which she could not expect herself, though he should lose it.

This was therefore an act of wickedness which could not be defeated, because it could not be suspected: the Earl did not imagine that there could exist in a human form a mother that would ruin her son without enriching herself, and therefore bestowed upon some other person six thousand pounds, which he had in his will bequeathed to Savage.

The same cruelty which incited his mother to intercept this provision which had been intended him prompted her in a short time to another project, a project worthy of such a disposition! she endeavoured to rid herself from the danger of being at any time made known to him, by sending him secretly to the American plantations*.

By whose kindness this scheme was counteracted, or by what interposition she was induced to lay aside her design, I know not; it is not improbable that the Lady Mason might persuade or compel her to desist, or perhaps she could not easily find accomplices wicked enough to concur in so cruel an action; for it may be conceived that those who had, by a long gradation of guilt, hardened their hearts against the sense of common wickedness, would yet be shocked at the design of a mother to expose her son to slave-

* Savage's Preface to his Miscellany, p. 29.

ry and want, to expose him without interest, and without provocation; and Savage might on this occasion find protectors and advocates among those who had long traded in crimes, and whom compassion had never touched before.

Being hindered, by whatever means, from banishing him into another country, she formed, soon after, a scheme for burying him in poverty and obscurity in his own; and that his station of life, if not the place of his residence, might keep him for ever at a distance from her, she ordered him to be placed with a shoe-maker in Holborn, that after the usual time of trial he might become his apprentice*.

It is generally reported that this project was for some time successful, and that Savage was employed at the awl longer than he was willing to confess; nor was it perhaps any great advantage to him that an unexpected discovery determined him to quit his occupation.

About this time his nurse, who had always treated him as her own son, died; and it was natural for him to take care of those effects which, by her death were, as he imagined, become his own; he therefore went to her house, opened her boxes, and examined her papers, among which he found some letters written to her by the Lady Mason, which informed him of his birth, and the reasons for which it was concealed.

* Preface to Savage's Miscellanies, p. 29.

He was now no longer satisfied with the employment which had been allotted him, but thought he had a right to share the affluence of his mother, and therefore, without scruple, applied to her as her son, and made use of every art to awaken her tenderness and attract her regard; but neither his letters nor the interposition of those friends which his merit or his distress procured him made any impression upon her mind; she still resolved to neglect, though she could no longer disown him.

It was to no purpose that he frequently solicited her to admit him to see her; she avoided him with the most vigilant precaution, and ordered him to be excluded from her house, by whomsoever he might be introduced, and what reason soever he might give for entering it.

Savage was at the same time so touched with the discovery of his real mother, that it was his frequent practice to walk in the dark evenings for several hours before her door, in hopes of seeing her as she might come by accident to the window, or cross her apartment with a candle in her hand.

But all this assiduity and tenderness were without effect, for he could neither soften her heart nor open her hand, and was reduced to the utmost miseries of want while he was endeavouring to awaken the affection of a mother: he was therefore obliged to seek some other means of support, and, having no profession, became by necessity an author.

At this time the attention of all the literary world was engrossed by the Bangorian controversy, which filled the press with pamphlets, and the coffee-houses with disputants. Of this subject, as most popular, he made choice for his first attempt, and without any other knowledge of the question than he had casually collected from conversation, published a poem against the bishop.

What was the success or merit of this performance I know not; it was probably lost among the innumerable pamphlets to which that dispute gave occasion. Mr. Savage was himself in a little time ashamed of it, and endeavoured to suppress it, by destroying all the copies he could collect.

He then attempted a more gainful kind of writing *, and in his eighteenth year offered to the stage a comedy borrowed from a Spanish plot, which was refused by the players, and was therefore given by him to Mr. Bullock, who, having more interest, made some slight alterations, and brought it upon the stage under the title of Woman's a Riddle, but allowed the unhappy Author no part of the profit.

Not discouraged, however, at his repulse, he wrote two years afterwards, Love in a Veil, another comedy, borrowed likewise from the Spanish, but with little better success than before; for though it was received and acted, yet it appeared so late in the year, that the Author obtained no other advantage

* Jacob's Lives of Dramatic Poets.

from it than the acquaintance of Sir Richard Steele and Mr. Wilks, by whom he was pitied, caressed, and relieved.

Sir Richard Steele having declared in his favour with all the ardour of benevolence which constituted his character, promoted his interest with the utmost zeal related his misfortunes, applauded his merit, took all opportunities of recommending him, and asserted that "the inhumanity of his mother had given "him a right to find every good man his father."

Nor was Mr. Savage admitted to his acquaintance only, but to his confidence, of which he sometimes related an instance too extraordinary to be omitted, as it affords a very just idea of his patron's character.

He was once desired by Sir Richard, with an air of the utmost importance, to come very early to his house the next morning. Mr. Savage came as he had promised, found the chariot at the door, and Sir Richard waiting for him, and ready to go out. What was intended, and whither they were to go Savage could not conjecture, and was not willing to inquire, but immediately seated himself with Sir Richard: the coachman was ordered to drive, and they hurried with the utmost expedition to Hyde-Park Corner, where they stopped at a petty tavern, and retired to a private room. Sir Richard then informed him that he intended to publish a pamphlet, and that he had desired him to come thither that he might write for

him. They soon sat down to the work. Sir Richard dictated, and Savage wrote, till the dinner that had been ordered was put upon the table. Savage was surprised at the meanness of the entertainment, and after some hesitation ventured to ask for wine, which Sir Sichard, not without reluctance, ordered to be brought. They then finished their dinner, and proceeded in their pamphlet, which they concluded in the afternoon.

Mr. Savage then imagined his task over, and expected that Sir Richard would call for the reckoning, and return home: but his expectations deceived him, for Sir Richard told him that he was without money, and that the pamphlets must be sold before the dinner could be paid for; and Savage was therefore obliged to go and offer their new production to sale for two guineas, which with some difficulty he obtained. Sir Richard then returned home, having retired that day only to avoid his creditors, and composed the pamphlet only to discharge his reckoning.

Mr. Savage related another fact equally uncommon, which, though it has no relation to his Life, ought to be perserved. Sir Rihard Steele having one day invited to his house a great number of persons of the first quality, they were surprised at the number of liveries which surrounded the table; and after dinner, when wine and mirth had set them free from the observation of rigid ceremony, one of them

inquired of Sir Richard how such an expensive train of domesticks could be consistent with his fortune? Sir Richard very frankly confessed, that they were fellows of whom he would very willingly be rid: and being then asked why he did not discharge them? declared that they were bailiffs who had introduced themselves with an execution, and whom, since he could not send them away, he had thought it convenient to embellish with liveries, that they might do him credit while they staid.

His friends were diverted with the expedient, and by paying the debt discharged their attendance, having obliged Sir Richard to promise that they should never again find him graced with a retinue of the same kind.

Under such a tutor Mr. Savage was not likely to learn prudence or frugality, and perhaps many of the misfortunes which the want of those virtues brought upon him in the following parts of his life might be justly imputed to so unimproving an example.

Nor did the kindness of Sir Richard end in common favours. He proposed to have established him in some settled scheme of life, and to have contracted a kind alliance with him, by marrying him to a natural daughter, on whom he intended to bestow a thousand pounds: but though he was always lavish of future bounties, he conducted his affairs in such a manner, that he was very seldom able to keep his

promises, or execute his own intentions; and as he was never able to raise the sum which he had offered the marriage was delayed. In the mean time he was officiously informed that Mr. Savage had ridiculed him; by which he was so much exasperated, that he withdrew the allowance which he had paid him, and never afterwards admitted him to his house.

It is not indeed unlikely that Savage might by his imprudence expose himself to the malice of a tale-bearer; for his patron had many follies, which as his discernment easily discovered, his imagination might sometimes incite him to mention too ludicrously. A little knowledge of the world is sufficient to discover that such weakness is very common, and that there are few who do not sometimes, in the wantonness of thoughtless mirth, or the heat of transient resentment, speak of their friends and benefactors with levity and contempt, though in their cooler moments they want neither sense of their kindness nor reverence for their virtue. The fault, therefore, of Mr. Savage was rather negligence than ingratitude: but Sir Richard must likewise be acquitted of severity; for who is there that can patiently bear contempt from one whom he has relieved and supported, whose establishment he has laboured, and whose interest he has promoted?

He was now again abandoned to Fortune, without any other friend than Mr. Wilks; a man who,

whatever were his abilities or skill as an actor, deserves at least to be remembered for his virtues*, which are not often to be found in the world, and perhaps less often in his profession than in others. To be humane, generous and candid, is a very high degree of merit in any case; but those qualities deserve still greater praise, when they are found in that condition, which makes almost every other man, for whatever reason, contemptuous, insolent, petulant, selfish, and brutal.

* As it is a loss to mankind when any good action is forgotten, I shall insert another instance of Mr. Wilks's generosity very little known. Mr. Smith, a gentleman educated at Dublin, being hindered by an impediment in his pronunciation from engaging in orders, for which his friends designed him, left his own country, and came to London in quest of employment, but found his solicitations fruitless, and his necessities every day more pressing. In this distress he wrote a tragedy, and offered it to the players, by whom it was rejected. Thus were his last hopes defeated, and he had no other prospect than of the most deplorable poverty: but Mr. Wilks thought his performance though not perfect, at least worthy of some reward, and therefore offered him a benefit. This favour he improved with so much diligence, that the house afforded him a considerable sum, with which he went to Leyden, applied himself to the study of physic, and prosecuted his design with so much diligence and success, that when Dr. Boerhaave was desired by the Czarina to recommend proper persons to introduce into Russia the practice and study of physic, Dr. Smith was one of those whom he selected. He had a considerable pension settled on him at his arrival, and was one of the chief physicians at the Russian court.

As Mr. Wilks was one of those to whom Calamity seldom complained without relief, he naturally took an unfortunate wit into his protection, and not only assisted him in any casual distresses, but continued an equal and steady kindness to the time of his death.

By his interposition Mr. Savage once obtained from his mother fifty pounds *, and a promise of one hundred and fifty more; but it was the fate of this unhappy man that few promises of any advantage to him were performed. His mother was infected, among others, with the general madness of the South-sea traffic, and having been disappointed in her expectations, refused to pay what perhaps nothing but the prospect of sudden affluence prompted her to promise.

Being thus obliged to depend upon the friendship of Mr. Wilks, he was consequently, an assiduous frequenter of the theatres, and in a short time the amusements of the stage took such possession of his mind that he never was absent from a play in several years.

This constant attendance naturally procured him the acquaintance of the players, and, among others, of Mrs. Oldfield, who was so much pleased with

* This is asserted upon the credit of the author of his life, which was published 1727.

his conversation, and touched with his misfortunes, that she allowed him a settled pension of fifty pounds a year, which was, during her life, regularly paid.

That this act of generosity may receive its due praise, and that the good actions of Mrs. Oldfield may not be sullied by her general character, it is proper to mention what Mr. Savage often declared in the strongest terms, that he never saw her alone, or in any other place than behind the scenes.

At her death he endeavoured to shew his gratitude in the most decent manner, by wearing mourning as for a mother, but did not celebrate her in elegies, because he knew that too great profusion of praise would only have revived those faults which his natural equity did not allow him to think less because they were committed by one who favoured him, but of which, though his virtue would not endeavour to palliate them, his gratitude would not suffer him to prolong the memory, or diffuse the censure.

In his Wanderer he has indeed taken an opportunity of mentioning her, but celebrates her not for her virtue but her beauty, an excellence which none ever denied her. This is the only encomium with which he has rewarded her liberality, and perhaps he has even in this been too lavish of his praise. He seems to have thought that never to mention his benefactress would have an appearance of ingratitude,

though to have dedicated any particular performance to her memory would have only betrayed an officious partiality that, without exalting her character, would have depressed his own.

He had sometimes, by the kindness of Mr. Wilks, the advantage of a benefit, on which occasions he often received uncommon marks of regard and compassion; and was once told by the Duke of Dorset, that it was just to consider him as an injured nobleman, and that in his opinion the nobility ought to think themselves obliged without solicitation, to take every opportunity of supporting him by their countenance and patronage. But he had generally the mortification to hear that the whole interest of his mother was employed to frustrate his applications, and that she never left any expedient untried by which he might be cut off from the possibility of supporting life. The same disposition she endeavoured to diffuse among all those over whom nature or fortune gave her any influence, and indeed succeeded too well in her design, but could not always propagate her effrontery with her cruelty; for some of those whom she incited against him were ashamed of their own conduct, and boasted of that relief which they never gave him.

In this censure I do not indiscriminately involve all his relations; for he has mentioned, with gratitude, the humanity of one lady whose name I am now unable to recollect, and to whom, therefore, I can-

not pay the praises which she deserves for having acted well in opposition to influence, precept and example.

The punishment which our laws inflict upon those parents who murder their infants is well known, nor has its justice, ever been contested; but if they deserve death who destroys a child in its birth, what pains can be severe enough for her who forbears to destroy him only to inflict sharper miseries upon him; who prolongs his life only to make it miserable; and who exposes him, without care and without pity, to the malice of oppression, the caprices of chance, and the temptations of poverty; who rejoices to see him overwhelmed with calamities; and when his own industry, or the charity of others, has enabled him to rise for a short time above his miseries, plunges him again into his former distress?

The kindness of his friends not affording him any constant supply, and the prospect of improving his fortune, by enlarging his acquaintance, necessarily leading him to places of expence, he found it necessary to endeavour once more at dramatic poetry, f which he was now better qualified by a more exte sive knowledge and longer observation: but hav been unsuccessful in comedy, though rather for w of opportunities than genius, he resolved no try whether he should not be more fortunate i hibiting a tragedy.

The story which he chose for the subject was that of Sir Thomas Overbury, a story well adapted to the stage, though perhaps not far enough removed from the present age to admit properly the fictions necessary to complete the plan; for the mind, which naturally loves truth, is always most offended with the violation of those truths of which we are most certain, and we of course conceive those facts most certain which approach nearest to our own time.

Out of this story he formed a tragedy which, if the circumstances in which he wrote it, be considered, will afford at once an uncommon proof of strength of genius and evenness of mind, of a serenity not to be ruffled, and an imagination not to be suppressed.

During a considerable part of the time in which he was employed upon this performance he was without lodging, and often without meat; nor had he any other conveniences for study than the fields or the street allowed him; there he used to walk and form his speeches, and afterwards step into a shop, beg for a few moments the use of the pen and ink, and write down what he had composed upon paper which he had picked up by accident.

If the performance of a writer thus distressed is imperfect, its faults ought surely to be imputed to a cause very different from want of genius, and must rather excite pity than provoke censure.

But when, under these discouragements, the tragedy was finished, there yet remained the labour of introducing it on the stage, an undertaking which, to an ingenuous mind, was in a very high degree vexatious and disgusting; for having little interest or reputation, h was obliged to submit himself wholly to the players, and admit, with whatever reluctance, the emendations of Mr. Cibber, which he always considered as the digrace of his performance.

He had indeed in Mr. Hill another critic of a very different class, from whose friendship he received great assistance on many occasions, and whom he never mentioned but with the utmost tenderness and regard. He had been for some time distinguished by him with very particular kindness, and on this occasion it was natural to apply to him as an author of an established character. He therefore sent this tragedy to him, with a short copy of verses, in which he desired his correction. Mr. Hill, whose humanity and politeness are generally known, readily complied with his request; but as he is remarkable for singularity of sentiment, and bold experiments in language, Mr. Savage did not think his pla much improved by his innovation, and had even that time the courage to reject several passages whi he could not approve; and, what is still more lau ble, Mr. Hill had the generosity not to resent neglect of his alterations, but wrote the prolo

and epilogue, in which he touches on the circumstances of the Author with great tenderness.

After all these obstructions and compliances he was only able to bring his play upon the stage in the summer, when the chief actors had retired, and the rest were in possession of the house for their own advantage. Among these Mr. Savage was admitted to play the part of Sir Thomas Overbury, by which he gained no great reputation, the theatre being a province for which Nature seemed not to have designed; for neither his voice, look, nor gesture, were such as are expected on the stage, and he was himself so much ashamed of having been reduced to appear as a player, that he always blotted out his name from the list when a copy of a tragedy was to be shown to his friends.

In the publication of performance he was more successful; for the rays of genius that glimmered in it, that glimmered thro' all the mists which Poverty and Cibber had been able to spread over it, procured him the notice, and esteem of many persons eminent for their rank, their virtue, and their wit.

Of this play, acted, printed, and dedicated, the accumulated profits arose to an hundred pounds, which he thought at that time a very large sum, having never been master of so much before.

In the Dedication*, for which he received ten

* To Herbert Tryst, Esq. of Herefordshire.

guineas, there is nothing remarkable. The Preface contains a very liberal encomium on the blooming excellencies of Mr. Theophilus Cibber, which Mr. Savage could not, in the latter part of his life, see his friends about to read without snatching the play out of their hand. The generosity of Mr. Hill did not end this occasion; for afterwards, when Mr. Savage's necessities returned, he encouraged a subscription to a Miscellany of Poems in a very extraordinary manner, by publishing his story in the Plain Dealer*, with some affecting lines †, which he as-

* The Plain Dealer was a periodical paper written by Mr. Hill and Mr. Bond, whom Mr. Savage called the two contending powers of Light and Darkness. They wrote by turns each six Essays, and the character of the work was observed regularly to rise in Mr. Hills weeks, and fall in Mr. Bond's.

† Hopeless, abandon'd, aimless, and oppress'd,
Lost to delight, and ev'ry way distress'd,
Cross his cold bed in wild disorder thrown,
Thus sigh'd Alexis, friendless, and alone---
 Why do I breathe?---What joy can being give,
When she who gave me life forgets I live!
Feels not these wintry blasts---nor heeds my smart,
But shuts me from the shelter of her heart!
Saw me expos'd to want! to shame! to scorn!
To ills! ---which make it mis'ry to be born!
Cast me, regardless, on the world's bleak wild!
And bade me be a wretch while yet a child!
 Where can he hope for pity, peace, or rest,
Who moves no softness in a mother's breast?
Custom, law, reason, all! my cause forsake,
And Nature sleeps to keep my woes awake!
Crimes which the cruel scarce believe can be,
The kind are guilty of to ruin me.

serts to have been written by Mr. Savage upon the treatment received by him from his mother, but of which he was himself the author, as Mr. Savage afterwards declared. These lines, and the paper in which they were inserted had a very powerful effect upon all but his mother, whom, by making her cruelty more public, they only hardened in her aversion.

Mr. Hill not only promoted the subscription to the Miscellany, but furnished likewise the greatest part of the poems of which it is composed, and particularly The Happy Man, which he published as a specimen.

The subscriptions of those whom these papers should influence to patronize merit in distress, without any other solicitation, were directed to be left at Button's Coffeehouse; and Mr. Savage going thither a few days afterwards, without expectation of any effect from his proposal, found, to his surprise,

Ev'n she who bore me blasts me with her hate,
And, meant my fortune, makes herself my fate!
 Yet has this sweet neglecter of my woes
The softest, tend'rest breast that Pity knows!
Her eyes shed mercy wheresoe'er they shine,
And her soul melts at every woe—but mine!
Sure then some secret fate for guilt unwill'd,
Some sentence pre-ordain'd to be fulfill'd,
Plung'd me thus deep in Sorrow's searching flood,
And wash'd me from the mem'ry of her blood!
 But, oh! whatever cause has mov'd her hate,
Let me but sigh in silence at my fate;
The god within perhaps may touch her breast,
And when she pities who can be distrest?

seventy guineas *, which had been sent him in consequence of the compassion excited by Mr. Hill's pathetic representation.

To this Miscellany he wrote a preface†, in which

* The names of those who so generously contributed to his relief having been mentioned in a former account, ought not to be omitted here. They were the Duchess of Cleveland, Lady Cheyney, Lady Castlemain, Lady Gower, Lady Lechmere, the Duchess Dowager and Duchess of Rutland, Lady Strafford, the Countess Dowager of Warwick, Mrs. Mary Floyer, Mrs. Sofuel Noel, Duke of Rutland, Lord Gainsborough, Lord Milsington, Mr. John Savage.

† The Preface is as follows:

Crudelis Mater magis, an Puer improbus ille?
Improbus ille Puer, crudelis tu quoque Mater. VIRG.

My readers, I am afraid, when they observe Richard Savage joined so close, and so constantly, to "son of "the late Earl Rivers," will impute to a ridiculous vanity what is the effect of an unhappy necessity, which my hard fortune has thrown me under.—I am to be pardoned for adhering a little tenaciously to my father, because my mother will allow me to be no body; and has almost reduced me, among heavier afflictions, to that uncommon kind of want which the Indians of America complained of at our first settling among them, when they came to beg names of the English, because (said they) we are poor men of ourselves, and have none we can lay claim to.

The good nature of those to whom I have not the honour to be known would forgive me the ludicrous turn of this beginning, if they knew but how little reason I have to be merry.—It was my misfortune to be son of the above-mentioned Earl by the late Countess of Macclesfield, (now widow of Colonel Henry Bret) whose divorce, on occasion of the amour which I was a consequence of,

he gives an account of his mother's cruelty in a very uncommon strain of humour, and with a gaiety of

has left something on record which I take to be very remarkable; and it is this: Certain of our great judges, in their temporal decisions, act with a spiritual regard to Levitical divinity, and in particular to the Ten Commandments, two of which seem, in my case, to have visibly influenced their opinions—"Thou shalt not commit adultery," pointed fullest on my mother; but as to "The Lord's visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children," it was considered as what could regard me only; and for that reason, I suppose, it had been inconsistent with the rules of sanctity to assign provision out of my mother's returned estate for support of an infant sinner.

Thus, while legally the son of one Earl, and naturally of another, I am, nominally, nobody's son at all: for the Lady having given me too much father, thought it but an equivalent deduction to leave me no mother, by way of balance.—So I am sported into the world, a kind of shuttlecock, between Law and Nature—if Law had not beaten me back by the stroke of an act, on purpose, I had not been above wit by the privilege of a man of quality; nay, I might have preserved, into the bargain, the lives of Duke Hamilton, and Lord Mohun, whose dispute arose from the estate of that Earl of Macclesfield whom (but for the mentioned act) I must have called Father.—And if Nature had not struck me off with a stranger blow than Law did, the other Earl, who was most emphatically my father, could never have been told I was dead, when he was about to enable me, by his will, to have lived to some purpose. An unaccountable severity of a mother! whom I was then not old enough to have deserved it from, and by which I am a single unhappy instance among that nobleman's natural children, and thrown friendless on the world, without means of supporting myself, and without authority to apply to those whose duty I know it is to support me.

Thus, however ill qualified I am to live by my wits, I

imagination which the success of his subscription probably produced.

have the best plea in the world for attempting it, since it is too apparent that I was born to it.—Having wearied my judgment with fruitless endeavours to be happy, I gave the reins to my fancy, that I might learn at least to be easy.

But I cease a while to speak of myself, that I may say something of my Miscellany.—I was furnished, by the verses of my friends, with wit enough to deserve a subscription, but I wanted another much more profitable quality, which should have emboldened me to solicit it, (another of my wants, that, I hope, may be imputed to my mother!) I had met with little encouragement but for the endeavours of some few gentlemen in my behalf, who were generous enough to consider my ill fortune as a merit that entitled me to their notice.

Among these I am particularly indebted to the author of the Plain Dealers, who was pleased, in two of his papers, (which I entreat his pardon for reprinting before my Miscellany) to point out my unhappy story to the world with so touching a humanity, and so good an effect, that many persons of quality, of all ranks, and of both sexes, distinguished themselves with the promptness he had hinted to the noble-minded; and not staying till they were applied to, sent me the honour of their subscriptions, in the most liberal and handsome manner, for encouragement of my undertaking.

I ought here to acknowledge several favours from Mr. Hill, whose writings are a shining ornament of this Miscellany; but I wave detaining my readers, and beg leave to refer them to a copy of verses called The Friend *, which I have taken the liberty to address to that gentleman.

To return to the Lady, my mother.—Had the celebrated Mr. Locke been acquainted with her example, it

* See under Epistles.

The Dedication is addressed to the Lady Mary Wortley Montague, whom he flatters without re-

had certainly appeared in his chapter against innate practical principles, because it would have completed his instances of enormities; some of which, though not exactly in the order that he mentions them, are as follow—"Have there not been," says he, "whole nations, and "those of the most civilized people, amongst whom the "exposing their children to perish by want, or wild "beasts, has been a practice as little condemned or scru-"pled as the begetting them?" Were I inclinable to be serious, I could easily prove that I have not been more gently dealt with by Mrs. Bret; but if this is any way foreign to my case, I shall find a nearer example in the whimsical one that ensues.

"It is familiar," says the afore-cited author, "among "the Mengrelians, a people professing Christianity, to "bury their children alive without scruple."—There are indeed sundry sects of Christians, and I have often wondered which could be my mamma's, but now I find she piously professes and practises Christianity after the manner of the Mengrelians; she industriously obscured me, when my fortune depended on my being known, and, in that sense, she may be said to have buried me alive; and sure, like a Mengrelian, she must have committed the action without scruple; for she is a woman of spirit, and can see the consequence without remorse.—"The Ca-"ribees," continues my author, "were wont to castrate "their children, in order to fat and eat them."—Here indeed I can draw no parallel; for to speak justice of the Lady, she never contributed ought to have me pampered, but always promoted my being starved; nor did she, even in my infancy, betray fondness enough to be suspected of a design to devour me; but, on the contrary, not enduring me ever to approach her; offered a bribe to have me shipped off, in an odd manner, to one of the plantations.—When I was about fifteen her affection began to awake,

serve, and, to confess the truth, with very little art*. The same observation may be extended to all his De-

and had I but known my interest I had been handsomely provided for. In short, I was solicited to be bound apprentice to a very honest and reputable occupation—a shoemaker! an offer which I undutifully rejected. I was, in fine, unwilling to understand her in a literal sense, and hoped that, like the prophets of old, she might have hinted her mind in a kind of parable, or proverbial way of speaking; as thus—That one time or other I might, on due application, have the honour of taking the length of her foot.

Mr. Locke mentions another set of people that dispatch their children, if a pretended astrologer declares them to have unhappy stars.—Perhaps my mamma has procured some cunning man to calculate my nativity; or having had some ominous dream, which preceded my birth, the dire event may have appeared to her in the dark and dreary bottom of a china cup, where coffee stains are often consulted for prophesies, and held as infallible as were the leaves of the ancient Sibyls.—To be partly serious, I am rather willing to wrong her judgment, by suspecting it to be tainted a little with the tenets of superstition, than suppose she can be mistress of a seared conscience, and act on no principle at all.

* This the following extract from it will prove.

—"Since our country has been honoured with the "glory of your wit, as elevated and immortal as your "soul, it no longer remains a doubt whether your sex "have strength of mind in proportion to their sweetness. "There is something in your verses as distinguished as "your air—They are as strong as truth, as deep as reason, "as clear as innocence, and as smooth as beauty—They "contain a nameless and peculiar mixture of force and "grace, which is at once so movingly serene, and so "majestically lovely, that it is too amiable to appear any "where but in your eyes and in your writings.

dications; his compliments are constrained and violent, heaped together without the grace of order or the decency of introduction: he seems to have written his panegyrics for the perusal only of his patrons, and to have imagined that he had no other task than to pamper them with praises, however gross; and that flattery would make its way to the heart without the assistance of elegance or invention.

Soon afterwards the death of the King furnished a general subject for a poetical contest, in which Mr. Savage engaged, and is allowed to have carried the prize of honour from his competitors; but I know not whether he gained by his performance any other advantage than the increase of his reputation; though it must certainly have been with farther views that he prevailed upon himself to attempt a species of writing of which all the topics had been long before exhausted, and which was made at once difficult by the multitudes that had failed in it, and those that had succeeded.

He was now advancing in reputation, and though frequently involved in very distressful perplexities, appeared however to be gaining upon mankind, when both his fame and his life were endangered by

"As Fortune is not more my enemy than I am the "enemy of flattery, I know not how I can forbear this "application to your Ladyship, because there is scarce a "possibility that I should say more than I believe when "I am speaking of your Excellence."

an event of which it is not yet determined whether it ought to be mentioned as a crime or a calamity.

On the 20th of November 1727, Mr. Savage came from Richmond, where he then lodged, that he might pursue his studies with less interruption with an intent to discharge another lodging which he had in Westminster, and accidentally meeting two gentlemen his acquaintances, whose names were Merchant and Gregory, he went in with them to a neighbouring coffeehouse, and sat drinking till it was late, it being in no time of Mr. Savage's life any part of his character to be the first of the company that desired to separate. He would willingly have gone to bed in the same house, but there was not room for the whole company, and therefore they agreed to ramble about the streets, and divert themselves with such amusements as should offer themselves till morning.

In their walk they happened unluckily to discover light in Robinson's Coffee house near Charing-cross, and therefore went in. Merchant, with some rudeness, demanded a room, and was told that there was a good fire in the next parlour, which the company were about to leave, being then paying their reckoning. Merchant, not satisfied with this answer, rushed into the room, and was followed by his companions. He then petulantly placed himself between the company and the fire, and soon after kicked down the table. This produced a quarrel,

swords were drawn on both sides, and one Mr. James Sinclair was killed. Savage having wounded likewise a maid that held him, forced his way with Merchant out of the house; but being intimidated and confused, without resolution either to fly or stay, they were taken in a back court by one of the company, and some soldiers whom he had called to his assistance.

Being secured and guarded that night, they were, in the morning, carried before three justices, who, committed them to the Gatehouse, from whence upon the death of Mr. Sinclair, which happened the same day, they were removed in the night to Newgate, where they were however treated with some distinction, exempted from the ignominy of chains, and confined not among the common criminals, but in the Press-yard.

When the day of Trial came the court was crowded in a very unusual manner, and the public appeared to interest itself as in a cause of general concern. The witnesses against Mr Savage and his friends were, the woman who kept the house, which was a house of ill fame, and her maid, the men who were in the room with Mr. Sinclair, and a woman of the Town, who had been drinking with them, and with whom one of them had been seen in bed. They swore, in general, that Merchant gave the provocation which Savage and Gregory drew their swords to justify; that Savage drew first, and that

he stabbed Sinclair when he was not in a posture of defence, or while Gregory commanded his sword; that after he had given the thrust he turned pale, and would have retired, but that the maid clung round him, and one of the company endeavored to detain him, from whom he broke, by cutting the maid on the head, but was afterwards taken in a court.

There was some difference in their depositions; one did not see Savage give the wound, another saw it given when Sinclair held his point towards the ground; and the woman of the Town asserted that she did not see Sinclair's sword at all. This difference, however, was very far from amounting to inconsistency, but it was sufficient to shew that the hurry of the dispute was such that it was not easy to discover the truth with relation to particular circumstances, and that therefore some deductions were to be made from the credibility of the testimonies.

Sinclair had declared several times before his death that he received his wound from Savage, nor did Savage at his trial deny the fact, but endeavoured partly to extenuate it by urging the suddenness of the whole action, and the impossibility of any ill design or premeditated malice, and partly to justify it by the necessity of self-defence, and the hazard of his own life, if he had lost that opportunity of giving the thrust. He observed that nei-

ther reason nor law obliged a man to wait for the blow which was threatened, and which, if he should suffer it, he might never be able to return; that it was always allowable to prevent an assault, and to preserve life by taking away that of the adversary by whom it was endangered.

With regard to the violence with which he endeavoured to escape, he declared that it was not his design to fly from justice, or decline a trial, but to avoid the expences and severities of a prison, and that he intended to have appeared at the bar without compulsion.

This defence, which took up more than an hour, was heard by the multitude that thronged the court with the most attentive and respectful silence. Those who thought he ought not to be acquitted owned that applause could not be refused him; and those who before pitied his misfortunes now reverenced his abilities.

The witnesses which appeared against him were proved to be persons of characters which did not entitle them to much credit; a common strumpet, a woman by whom strumpets were entertained, and a man by whom they were supported; and the character of Savage was, by several persons of distinction, asserted to be that of a modest inoffensive man, not inclined to broils or to insolence, and who had, to that time, been only known for his misfortunes and his wit.

Had his audience been his judges he had undoubtedly been acquitted; but Mr. Page, who was then upon the bench, treated him with his usual insolence and severity; and when he had summed up the evidence, endeavoured to exasperate the jury, as Mr. Savage used to relate it, with this eloquent harangue.

"Gentlemen of the jury, you are to consider "that Mr. Savage is a very great man, a much "greater man than you or I, Gentlemen of the jury; "that he wears very fine clothes, much finer "clothes than you or I, Gentlemen of the jury; "that he has abundance of money in his pocket, "much more money than you or I, Gentlemen of "the jury; but, Gentlemen of the jury, is it not "a very hard case, Gentlemen of the jury, that "Mr. Savage should therefore kill you or me, "Gentlemen of the jury?"

Mr. Savage hearing his defence thus misrepresented, and the men who were to decide his fate incited against him by invidious comparisons, resolutely asserted that his cause was not candidly explained, and began to recapitulate what he had before said with regard to his condition, and the necessity of endeavouring to escape the expences of imprisonment; but the judge having ordered him to be silent, and repeated his orders without effect, commanded that he should be taken from the bar by force.

The jury then heard the opinion of the Judge, that good characters were of no weight against positive evidence, though they might turn the scale where it was doubtful; and that though, when two men attack each other, the death of either is only manslaughter; but where one is the aggressor, as in the case before them, and in pursuance of his first attack kills the other, the law supposes the action, however sudden, to be malicious. They then deliberated upon their verdict, and determined that Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were guilty of murder, and Mr. Merchant, who had no sword, only of manslaughter.

Thus ended this memorable trial, which lasted eight hours. Mr. Savage and Mr. Gregory were conducted back to prison, where they were more closely confined, and loaded with irons of fifty pounds weight. Four days afterwards they were sent back to the court to receive sentence; on which occasion Mr. Savage made, as far as it could be retained in memory, the following speech:

"It is now, my Lord, too late to offer any "thing by way of defence or vindication; nor can "we expect ought from your Lordships, in this "court, but the sentence which the law requires "you, as judges, to pronounce against men of our "calamitous condition.—But we are also persua-"ded that, as mere men, and out of this seat of "rigorous justice, you are susceptive of the tender

"passions, and too humane not to commiserate "the unhappy situation of those whom the law "sometimes perhaps—exacts—from you to pro-"nounce upon. No doubt you distinguish be-"tween offences which arise out of premeditation "and a disposition habituated to vice or immora-"lity, and transgressions which are the unhappy "and unforeseen effects of casual absence of "reason and sudden impulse of passion; we "therefore hope you will contribute all you can "to an extension of that mercy which the gentle-"men of the jury have been pleased to shew Mr. "Merchant, who (allowing facts as sworn "against us by the evidence) has led us into this "our calamity. I hope this will not be construed "as if we meant to reflect upon that gentleman "or remove any thing from us upon him, or "that we repine the more at our fate because he "has no participation of it: no, my Lord! for "my part, I declare nothing could more soften "my grief than to be without any companion in "so great a misfortune."

Mr. Savage had now no hopes of life but from the mercy of the Crown, which, was very earnestly solicited by his friends, and which, with whatever difficulty the story may obtain belief, was obstructed only by his mother.

To prejudice the Queen against him she made use of an incident which was omitted in the order

of time that it might be mentioned together with the purpose which it was made to serve. Mr. Savage, when he had discovered his birth, had an incessant desire to speak to his mother, who always avoided him in public, and refused him admission into her her house.

One evening walking, as it was his custom, in the street that she inhabited, he saw the door of her house by accident open; he entered it, and, finding no person in the passage to hinder him, went up stairs to salute her. She discovered him before he could enter her chamber, alarmed the family with the most distressful outcries, and when she had by her screams gathered them about her, ordered them to drive out of the house that villain who had forced himself in upon her, and endeavoured to murder her. Savage, who had attempted with the most submissive tenderness to soften her rage, hearing her utter so detestable an accusation, thought it prudent to retire, and, I believe, never attempted afterwards to speak to her.

But, shocked as he was with her falsehood and her cruelty, he imagined that she intended no other use of her lie than to set herself free from his embraces and solicitations, and was very far from suspecting that she would treasure it in her memory as an instrument of future wickedness, or that she would endeavour, for this fictitious assault, to deprive him of his life.

But when the Queen was solicited for his pardon, and informed of the severe treatments which he had suffered from his Judge, she answered, that however unjustifiable might be the manner of his trial, or whatever extenuation the action for which he was condemned might admit, she could not think that man a proper object of the King's mercy who had been capable of entering his mother's house in the night with an intent to murder her.

By whom this atrocious calumny had been transmitted to the Queen; whether she that invented had the front to relate it; whether she found any one weak enough to credit it, or corrupt enough to concur with her in her hateful design, I know not; but methods had been taken to persuade the Queen so strongly of the truth of it, that she for a long time refused to hear any of those who petitioned for his life.

Thus had Savage perished by the evidence of a bawd, a strumpet, and his mother, had not justice and compassion procured him an advocate of rank too great to be rejected unheard, and of virtue too eminent to be heard without being believed. His merit and his calamities happened to reach the ear of the Countess of Hertford, who engaged in his support with all the tenderness that is excited by pity, and all the zeal which is kindled by generosity, and demanding an audience of the Queen; laid before her the whole series of his mother's cruelty, exposed the improbability of an accusation by

which he was charged with an intent to commit a murder that could produce no advantage, and soon convinced her how little his former conduct could deserve to be mentioned as a reason for extraordinary severity.

The interposition of this lady was so successful, that he was soon after admitted to bail, and on the 9th of March 1728 pleaded the King's pardon.

It is natural to inquire upon what motives his mother could persecute him in a manner so outrageous and implacable; for what reason she could employ all the acts of malice, and all the snares of calumny, to take away the life of her own son, of a son who never injured her, who was never supported by her expence, nor obstructed any prospect of pleasure or advantage; why she should endeavour to destroy him by a lie, a lie which could not gain credit, but must vanish of itself at the first moment of examination; and of which only this can be said to make it probable, that it may be observed from her conduct that the most execrable crimes are sometimes committed without apparent temptation.

This mother is still alive, and may perhaps even yet, though her malice was so often defeated, enjoy the pleasure of reflecting, that the life which she often endeavoured to destroy was at least shortened by her maternal offices; that though she could not transport her son to the plantations, bury him in

the shop of a mechanic, or hasten the hand of the public executioner, she has yet had the satisfaction of imbittering all his hours, and forcing him into exigencies that hurried on his death.

It is by no means necessary to aggravate the enormity of this woman's conduct, by placing it in opposition to that of the Countess of Hertford; no one can fail to observe how much more amiable it is to relieve than to oppress, and to rescue innocence from destruction than to destroy without an injury.

Mr. Savage, during his imprisonment, his trial, and the time in which he lay under sentence of death, behaved with great firmness and equality of mind, and confirmed by his fortitude the esteem of those who before admired him for his abilities. The peculiar circumstances of his life were made more generally known by a short account* which was then published, and of which several thousands were in a few weeks dispersed over the nation; and the compassion of mankind operated so powerfully in his favour, that he was enabled, by frequent presents, not only to support himself, but to assist Mr. Gregory in prison; and when he was pardoned and released he found the number of his friends not lessened.

The nature of the act for which he had been tried was in itself doubtful; of the evidences which

* Written by Mr. Beckingham and another gentleman.

appeared against him the character of the man was not unexceptionable, that of the woman notoriously infamous: she whose testimony chiefly influenced the jury to condemn him afterwards retracted her assertions. He always himself denied that he was drunk, as had been generally reported. Mr. Gregory, who is now collector of Antigua, is said to declare him far less criminal than he was imagined even by some who favoured him; and Page himself afterwards confessed that he had treated him with uncommon rigour. When all these particulars are rated together, perhaps the memory of Savage may not be much sullied by his trial.

Some time after he had obtained his liberty he met in the street the woman that had sworn with so much malignity against him. She informed him that she was in distress, and, with a degree of confidence not easily attainable, desired him to relieve her. He, instead of insulting her misery, and taking pleasure in the calamities of one who had brought his life into danger, reproved her gently for her perjury, and changing the only guinea that he had, divided it equally between her and himself.

This is an action which in some ages would have made a saint, and perhaps in others a hero, and which, without an hyperbolical encomium, must be allowed to be an instance of uncommon generosity, an act of complicated virtue; by which

he at once relieved the poor, corrected the vicious, and forgave an enemy; by which he at once remitted the strongest provocations, and exercised the most ardent charity.

Compassion was indeed the distinguishing quality of Savage; he never appeared inclined to take advantage of weakness, to attack the defenceless, or to press upon the falling: whoever was distressed was certain at least of his good wishes; and when he could give no assistance to extricate them from misfortunes he endeavoured to sooth them by sympathy and tenderness.

But when his heart was not softened by the sight of misery he was sometimes obstinate in his resentment, and did not quickly lose the remembrance of an injury. He always continued to speak with anger of the insolence and partiality of Page, and a short time before his death revenged it by a satire.

It is natural to inquire in what terms Mr. Savage spoke of this fatal action when the danger was over, and he was under no necessity of using any art to set his conduct in the fairest light. He was not willing to dwell upon it, and if he transiently mentioned it, appeared neither to consider himself as a murderer nor as a man wholly free from the guilt of blood*. How much and how long he regretted it appeared in a poem which he published many years

* In one of his letters he styles it "a fatal quarrel but "too well known."

afterwards. On occasion of a copy of verses, in which the failings of good men were recounted, and in which the author had endeavoured to illustrate his position, that "the best may sometimes deviate from virtue," by an instance of murder committed by Savage in the heat of wine, Savage remarked that it was no very just representation of a good man to suppose him liable to drunkenness, and disposed in his riots to cut throats.

He was now indeed at liberty, but was, as before, without any other support than accidental favours and uncertain patronage afforded him, sources by which he was sometimes very liberally supplied, and which at other times were suddenly stopped; so that he spent his life between want and plenty, or, what was yet worse, between beggary and extravagance; for as whatever he received was the gift of Chance, which might as well favour him at one time as another, he was tempted to squander what he had, because he always hoped to be immediately supplied.

Another cause of his profusion was the absurd kindness of his friends, who at once rewarded and enjoyed his abilities by treating him at taverns, and habituated him to pleasures which he could not afford to enjoy, and which he was not able to deny himself, tho' he purchased the luxury of a single night by the anguish of cold and hunger for a week.

The experience of these inconveniences determined him to endeavour after some settled income, which, having long found submission and entreaties fruitless, he attempted to extort from his mother by rougher methods. He had now, as he acknowledged, lost that tenderness for her which the whole series of her cruelty had not been able wholly to repress, till he found, by the efforts which she made for his destruction, that she was not content with refusing to assist him, and being neutral in his struggles with poverty, but was as ready to snatch every opportunity of adding to his misfortunes, and that she was to be considered as an enemy implacably malicious, whom nothing but his blood could satisfy; he therefore threatened to harass her with lampoons, and to publish a copious narrative of her conduct, unless she consented to purchase an exemption from infamy by allowing him a pension.

This expedient proved successful: whether shame still survived though virtue was extinct, or whether her relations had more delicacy than herself, and imagined that some of the darts which Satire might point at her would glance upon them, Lord Tyrconnel, whatever were his motives, upon his promise to lay aside his design of exposing the cruelty of his mother, received him into his family, treated him as his equal, and engaged to allow him a pension of two hundred pounds a-year.

"This was the golden part of Mr. Savage's life, and for some time he had no reason to complain of Fortune; his appearance was splendid, his expences were large, and his acquaintance extensive. He was courted by all who endeavoured to be thought men of genius, and caressed by all who valued themselves upon a refined taste. To admire Mr. Savage was a proof of discernment, and to be acquainted with him was a title in poetical reputation: his presence was sufficient to make any place of public entertainment popular, and his approbation and example constituted the fashion: so powerful is genius when it is invested with the glitter of affluence! Men willingly pay to fortune that regard which they owe to merit, and are pleased, when they have an opportunity, at once of gratifying their vanity and practising their duty.

This interval of prosperity furnished him with opportunities of enlarging his knowledge of human nature, by contemplating life from its highest gradations to its lowest: and had he afterwards applied to dramatic poetry he would perhaps not have had many superiors; for as he never suffered any scene to pass before his eyes without notice, he had treasured in his mind all the different combinations of passions, and the innumerable mixtures of vice and virtue which distinguish one character from another; and as his conception was strong his expressions were clear; he easily received impressions

from objects, and very forcibly transmitted them to others.

Of his exact observations on human life he has left a proof which would do honour to the greatest names, in a small pamphlet called The Author to be Let, where he introduces Iscariot Hackney a prostitute scribbler, giving an account of his birth, his education, his disposition and morals, habits of life, and maxims of conduct. In the introduction are related many secret histories of the petty writers of that time, but sometimes mixed with ungenerous reflections on their birth, their circumstances, or those of their relations; nor can it be denied that some passages are such as Iscariot Hackney might himself have produced.

He was accused, likewise, of living in an appearance of friendship with some whom he satirized, and of making use of the confidence which he gained by a seeming kindness to discover failings and expose them: it must be confessed that Mr. Savage's esteem was no very certain possession, and that he would lampoon at one time those whom he had praised at another.

It may be alleged that the same man may change his principles, and that he who was once deservedly commended may be afterwards satirized with equal justice, or that the poet was dazzled with the appearance of virtue, and found the man whom he had celebrated, when he had an opportunity of examining

him more nearly, unworthy of the panegyric which he had too hastily bestowed; and that as a false satire ought to be recanted for the sake of him whose reputation may be injured, false praise ought likewise to be obviated, lest the distinction between vice and virtue, should be lost, lest a bad man should be trusted upon the credit of his encomiast, or lest others should endeavour to obtain the like praises by the same means.

But though these excuses may be often plausible, and sometimes just, they are very seldom satisfactory to mankind; and the writer who is not constant to his subject quickly sinks into contempt, his satire loses its force, and his panegyric its value, and he is only considered at one time as a flatterer and as a calumniator at another.

To avoid these imputations it is only necessary to follow the rules of virtue, and to preserve an unvaried regard to truth: for though it is undoubtedly possible that a man, however cautious, may be sometimes deceived by an artful appearance of virtue, or by false evidences of guilt, such errors will not be frequent; and it will be allowed that the name of an author would never have been made contemptible had no man ever said what he did not think, or misled others but when he was himself deceived.

If The Author to be Let was first published in a single pamphlet, and afterwards inserted in a col-

lection of pieces relating to The Dunciad, which were addressed by Mr. Savage to the Earl of Middlesex, in a dedication which he was prevailed upon to sign, though he did not write it, and in which there are some positions that the true author would perhaps not have published under his own name, and on which Mr. Savage afterwards reflected with no great satisfaction; the enumeration of the bad effects of the uncontrolled freedom of the press, and the assertion that the "liberties taken by the wri-" "ters of Journals with their superiors were exor-" "bitant and unjustifiable," very ill became men who have themselves not always shewn the exactest regard to the laws of subordination in their writings, and who have often satirized those that at least thought themselves their superiors, as they were eminent for their hereditary rank, and employed in the highest offices of the kingdom: but this is only an instance of that partiality which almost every man indulges with regard to himself. The liberty of the press is a blessing when we are inclined to write against others, and a calamity when we find ourselves overborne by the multitude of our assailants; as the power of the Crown is always thought too great by those who suffer by its influence, and too little by those in whose favour it is exerted; and a standing army is generally accounted necessary by those who command, and dangerous and oppressive by those who support it.

Mr. Savage was likewise very far from believing that the letters annexed to each species of bad poets in the Bathos were, as he was directed to assert, "set down at random;" for when he was charged by one of his friends with putting his name to such an improbability, he had no other answer to make than that "he did not think of it;" and his friend had too much tenderness to reply, that next to the crime of writing contrary to what he thought, was that of writing without thinking.

After having remarked what is false in this dedication, it is proper that I observe the impartiality which I recommend, by declaring what Savage asserted, that the account of the circumstances which attended the publication of The Dunciad, however strange and improbable, was exactly true.

The publication of this piece at this time raised Mr. Savage a great number of enemies among those that were attacked by Mr. Pope, with whom he was considered as a kind of confederate, and whom he was suspected of supplying with private intelligence and secret incidents; so that the ignominy of an informer was added to the terror of a satirist.

That he was not altogether free from literary hypocrisy, and that he sometimes spoke one thing and wrote another, cannot be denied, because he himself confessed, that when he lived in great fa-

miliarity with Dennis he wrote an epigram against him*.

Mr. Savage, however, set all the malice of all the pigmy writers at defiance, and thought the friendship of Mr. Pope cheaply purchased by being exposed to their censure and their hatred; nor had he any reason to repent of the preference, for he found Mr. Pope a steady and unalienable friend almost to the end of his life.

About this time, notwithstanding his avowed neutrality with regard to party, he published a panegyric on Sir Robert Walpole, for which he was rewarded by him with twenty guineas, a sum not very large, if either the excellence of the performance, or the affluence of the patron, be considered; but greater than he afterwards obtained from a person of yet higher rank, and more desirous in appearance of being distinguished as a patron of literature.

As he was very far from approving the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole, and in conversation mentioned him sometimes with acrimony, and generally

* This epigram was, I believe, never published.

Should Dennis publish you had stabb'd your brother,
Lampoon'd your monarch, or debauch'd your mother,
Say what revenge on Dennis can be had,
Too dull for laughter, for reply too mad?
On one so poor you cannot take the law,
On one so old your sword you scorn to draw:
Uncag'd, then, let the harmless monster rage,
Secure in dulness, madness, want, and age.

with contempt; as he was one of those who were always zealous in their assertions of the justice of the late opposition, jealous of the rights of the people, and alarmed by the long-continued triumph of the Court, it was natural to ask him what could induce him to employ his poetry in praise of that man who was, in his opinion, an enemy to liberty, and an oppressor of his country? He alleged that he was then dependant upon the Lord Tyrconnel, who was an implicit follower of the ministry, and that being enjoined by him, not without menaces, to write in praise of his leader, he had not resolution sufficient to sacrifice the pleasure of affluence to that of integrity.

On this, and on many other occasions, he was ready to lament the misery of living at the tables of other men, which was his fate from the beginning to the end of his life; for I know not whether he ever had, for three months together, a settled habitation, in which he could claim a right of residence.

To this unhappy state it is just to impute much of the inconstancy of his conduct; for though a readiness to comply with the inclination of others was no part of his natural character, yet he was sometimes obliged to relax his obstinacy, and submit his own judgement, and even his virtue, to the government of those by whom he was supported; so that if his miseries were sometimes the conse-

quences of his faults, he ought not yet to be wholly excluded from compassion, because his faults were very often the effects of his misfortunes.

In this gay period of his life, while he was surrounded by affluence and pleasure, he published The Wanderer, a moral poem, of which the design is comprised in these lines:

I fly all public care, all venal strife,
To try the still compar'd with active life;
To prove by these the sons of men may owe
The fruits of bliss to bursting clouds of woe;
That ev'n Calamity, by thought refin'd,
Inspirits and adorns the thinking mind.

And more distinctly in the following passage;

By woe the soul to daring action swells;
By woe in plaintless patience it excels;
From patience prudent, clear experience springs,
And traces knowledge thro' the course of things;
Thence hope is form'd, thence fortitude, success,
Renown--- whate'er men covet and caress.

This performance was always considered by himself as his masterpiece; and Mr. Pope, when he asked his opinion of it, told him that he read it once over and was not displeased with it, that it gave him more pleasure at the second perusal, and delighted him still more at the third.

It has been generally objected to The Wanderer that the disposition of the parts is irregular; that the design is obscure, and the plan perplexed; that the images, however beautiful, succeed each other without order; and that the whole performance is

not so much a regular fabric as a heap of shining materials thrown together by accident, which strikes rather with the solemn magnificence of a stupendous ruin than the elegant grandeur of a finished pile.

This criticism is universal, and therefore it is reasonable, to believe it at least in a great degree, just; but Mr. Savage was always of a contrary opinion, and thought his drift could only be missed by negligence or stupidity, and that the whole plan was regular, and the parts distinct.

It was never denied to abound with strong representations of nature, and just observations upon life; and it may easily be observed, that most of his pictures have an evident tendency to illustrate his first great position, "that good is the consequence of evil." The sun that burns up the mountains fructifies the vales; the deluge that rushes down the broken rocks with dreadful impetuosity is separated into purling brooks; and the rage of the hurricane purifies the air.

Even in this poem he has not been able to forbear one touch upon the cruelty of his mother, which, though remarkably delicate and tender, is a proof how deep an impression it had upon his mind.

This must be at least acknowledged, which ought to be thought equivalent to many other excellencies, that this poem can promote no other

purposes than those of virtue, and that it is written with a very strong sense of the efficacy of religion.

But my province is rather to give the history of Mr. Savage's performances than to display their beauties, or to obviate the criticisms which they have occasioned, and therefore I shall not dwell upon the particular passages which deserve applause: I shall neither shew the excellence of his descriptions, nor expatiate on the terrific portrait of suicide, nor point out the artful touches by which he has distinguished the intellectual features of the rebels who suffer death in his last canto: it is, however, proper to observe that Mr. Savage always declared the characters wholly fictitious and without the least allusion to any real persons or actions.

From a poem so diligently laboured, and so successfully finished, it might be reasonably expected that he should have gained considerable advantage; nor can it, without some degree of indignation and concern, be told, that he sold the copy for ten guineas, of which he afterwards returned two, that the two last sheets of the work might be reprinted, of which he had in his absence intrusted the correction to a friend, who was too indolent to perform it with accuracy.

A superstitious regard to the correction of his sheets was one of Mr. Savage's peculiarities: he

often altered, revised, recurred to its first reading or punctuation, and again adopted the alteration; he was dubious and irresolute without end, as on a question of the last importance, and at last was seldom satisfied: the intrusion or omission of a comma was sufficient to discompose him, and he would lament an error of a single letter as a heavy calamity. In one of his letters relating to an impression of some verses, he remarks that he had, with regard to the correction of the proof, "a spell upon him;" and indeed the anxiety with which he dwelt upon the minutest and most trifling niceties deserved no other name than that of fascination.

That he sold so valuable a performance for so small a price was not to be imputed either to necessity, by which the learned and ingenious are often obliged to submit to very hard conditions, or to avarice, by which the booksellers are frequently incited to oppress that genius by which they are supported, but to that intemperate desire of pleasure, and habitual slavery to his passions, which involved him in many perplexities; he happened at that time to be engaged in the pursuit of some trifling gratification, and, being without money for the present occasion, sold his poem to the first bidder, and perhaps for the first price that was proposed; and would probably have been content with less, if less had been offered him.

This poem was addressed to the Lord Tyrconnel,

not only in the first lines, but in a formal dedication, filled with the highest strains of panegyric, and the warmest professions of gratitude, but by no means remarkable for delicacy of connection or elegance of style.

These praises in a short time he found himself inclined to retract, being discarded by the man on whom he had bestowed them, and whom he then immediately discovered not to have deserved them. Of this quarrel, which every day made more bitter, Lord Tyrconnel and Mr. Savage assigned very different reasons, which might perhaps all in reality concur, though they were not at all convenient to be alleged by either party. Lord Tyrconnel affirmed that it was the constant practice of Mr. Savage to enter a tavern with any company that proposed it, drink the most expensive wines with great profusion, and when the reckoning was demanded to be without money: if, as it often happened, his company were willing to defray his part, the affair ended without any ill consequences: but if they were refractory, and expected that the wine should be paid for by him that drank it, his method of composition was, to take them with him to his own apartment, assume the government of the house, and order the butler, in an imperious manner, to set the best wine in the cellar before his company, who often drank till they forgot the respect due to the house in which they were entertained, indulged

themselves in the utmost extravagance of merriment, practised the most licentious frolics, and committed all the outrages of drunkenness.

Nor was this the only charge which Lord Tyrconnel brought against him: having given him a collection of valuable books, stamped with his own arms, he had the mortification to see them in a short time exposed to sale upon the stalls, it being usual with Mr. Savage, when he wanted a small sum, to take his books to the pawn broker.

Whoever was acquainted with Mr. Savage easily credited both these accusations: for having been obliged, from his first entrance into the world, to subsist upon expedients, affluence was not able to exalt him above them; and so much was he delighted with wine and conversation, and so long had he been accustomed to live by chance, that he would at any time go to the tavern without scruple, and trust for his reckoning to the liberality of his company, and frequently of company to whom he was very little known. This conduct indeed very seldom drew upon him those inconveniences that might be feared by any other person; for his conversation was so entertaining, and his address so pleasing, that few thought the pleasure which they received from him dearly purchased by paying for his wine. It was his peculiar happiness that he scarcely ever found a stranger whom he did not leave a friend; but it must likewise be added, that

he had not often a friend long without obliging him to become a stranger.

Mr. Savage, on the other hand, declared, that Lord Tyrconnel * quarrelled with him because he would not subtract from his own luxury and extravagance what he had promised to allow him, and that his resentment was only a plea for the violation of his promise: he asserted that he had done nothing that ought to exclude him from that subsistence which he thought not so much a favour as a debt, since it was offered him upon conditions which he had never broken, and that his only fault was that he could not be supported with nothing.

He acknowledged that Lord Tyrconnel often exhorted him to regulate his method of life, and not to spend all his nights in taverns, and that he appeared very desirous that he would pass those hours with him which he so freely bestowed upon others. This demand Mr. Savage considered as a censure of his conduct, which he could never patiently bear, and and which in the latter and cooler part of his life was so offensive to him, that he declared it as his resolution "to spurn that friend who should presume to dictate to him;" and it is not likely that in his earlier years he received admonitions with more calmness.

*His expressions in one of his letters was, "that Lord Tyrconnel had involved his estate, and therefore poorly sought an occasion to quarrel with him."

He was likewise inclined to resent such expectations, as tending to infringe his liberty, of which he was very jealous, when it was necessary to the gratification of his passions, and declared that the request was still more unreasonable, as the company to which he was to have been confined was unsupportably disagreable. This assertion affords another instance of that inconsistency of his writings with his conversation, which was so often to be observed. He forgot how lavishly he had, in his Dedication to The Wanderer, extolled the delicacy and penetration, the humanity and generosity, the candour and politeness, of the man whom, when he no longer loved him, he declared to be a wretch without understanding, without good nature, and without justice; of whose name he thought himself obliged to leave no trace in any future edition of his writings, and accordingly blotted it out of that copy of The Wanderer which was in his hands.

During his continuance with the Lord Tyrconnel he wrote The Triumph of Health and Mirth, on the recovery of Lady Tyrconnel from a languishing illness. This perfomance is remarkable not only for the gaiety of his ideas, and the melody of the numbers, but for the agreable fiction upon which it is formed. Mirth, overwhelmed with sorrow for the sickness of her favourite, takes a flight in quest of her sister Health, whom she finds reclined upon

the brow of a lofty mountain, amidst the fragrance of perpetual spring, with the breezes of the morning sporting about her; being solicited by her sister Mirth, she readily promises her assistance, flies away in a cloud, and impregnates the waters of Bath with new virtues, by which the sickness of Sapphira is relieved.

As the reputation of his abilities, the particular circumstances of his birth and life, the splendour of his appearance, and the distinction which was for some time paid him by Lord Tyrconnel, entitled him to familiarity with persons of higher rank than those to whose conversation he had been before admitted, he did not fail to gratify that curiosity which induced him to take a nearer view of those whom their birth, their employments, or their fortunes, necessarily place at a distance from the greatest part of mankind, and to examine whether their merit was magnified or diminished by the medium through which it was contemplated; whether the splendour with which they dazzled their admirers was inherent in themselves, or only reflected on them by the objects that surrounded them; and whether great men were selected for high stations, or high stations made great men.

For this purpose he took all opportunities of conversing familiarly with those who were most conspicuous at that time for their power or their influence; he watched their looser moments, and exami-

ned their domestic behaviour with that acuteness which Nature had given him, and which the uncommon variety of his life had contributed to increase, and that inquisitiveness which must always be produced in a vigorous mind, by an absolute freedom from all pressing and domestic engagements. His discernment was quick, and therefore he soon found in every person, and in every affair, something that deserved attention; he was supported by others without any care for himself, and was therefore at leisure to pursue his observations.

More circumstances to constitute a critic on human life could not easily concur, nor indeed could any man, who assumed from accidental advantages more praise than he could justly claim from his real merit, admit an acquaintance more dangerous than that of Savage, of whom likewise it must be confessed, that abilities really exalted above the common level, or virtue refined from passion, or proof against corruption, could not easily find an abler judge or a warmer advocate.

What was the result of Mr. Savage's inquiry, though he was not much accustomed to conceal his discoveries, it may not be entirely safe to relate, because the persons whose characters he criticised are powerful, and power and resentment are seldom strangers; nor would it perhaps be wholly just, because what he asserted in conversation might, though true in general, be heightened by some momentary

ardour of imagination, and as it can be delivered only from memory, may be imperfectly represented; so that the picture at first aggravated, and then unskilfully copied, may be justly suspected to retain no great dissemblance of the original.

It may, however, be observed, that he did not appear to have formed very elevated ideas of those to whom the administration of affairs, or the conduct of parties, has been intrusted; who have been considered as the advocates of the Crown, or the guardians of the people, and who have obtained the most implicit confidence, and the loudest applauses. Of one particular person, who has been at one time so popular as to be generally esteemed, and at another so formidable as to be universally detested, he observed that his acquisitions had been small, or that his capacity was narrow, and that the whole range of his mind was from obscenity to politics, and from politics to obscenity.

But the opportunity of indulging his speculations on great characters was now at an end. He was banished from the table of Lord Tyrconnel, and turned again adrift upon the world, without prospect of finding quickly any other harbour. As prudence was not one of the virtues by which he was distinguished, he had made no provision against a misfortune like this. And though it is not to be imagined but that the separation must for some time have been preceded by coldness, peevishness, or

neglect, though it was undoubtedly the consequence of accumulated provocations on both sides; yet every one that knew Savage will readily believe, that to him it was sudden as a stroke of thunder; that though he might have transiently suspected it, he had never suffered any thought so unpleasing to sink into his mind, but that he had driven it away by amusements, or dreams of future felicity and affluence, and had never taken any measures by which he might prevent a precipitation from plenty to indigence.

This quarrel and separation, and the difficulties to which Mr. Savage was exposed by them, were soon known both to his friends and enemies; nor was it long before he perceived, from the behaviour of both, how much is added to the lustre of genius by the ornaments of wealth.

His condition did not appear to excite much compassion, for he had not always been careful to use the advantages he enjoyed with that moderation which ought to have been with more than usual caution preserved by him, who knew, if he had reflected, that he was only a dependant on the bounty of another, whom he could expect to support him no longer than he endeavoured to preserve his favour, by complying with his inclinations, and whom he nevertheless set at defiance, and was continually irritating by negligence or encroachments.

Examples need not be sought at any great dis-

tance to prove that superiority of fortune has a natural tendency to kindle pride, and that pride seldom fails to exert itself in contempt and insult; and if this is often the effect of hereditary wealth, and of honours enjoyed only by the merit of others, it is some extenuation of any indecent triumphs to which this unhappy man may have been betrayed, that his prosperity was heightened by the force of novelty, and made more intoxicating by a sense of the misery in which he had so long languished, and perhaps of the insults which he had formerly borne, and which he might now think himself entitled to revenge. It is too common for those who have unjustly suffered pain to inflict it likewise in their turn with the same injustice, and to imagine that they have a right to treat others as they have themselves been treated.

That Mr. Savage was too much elevated by any good fortune is generally known; and some passages of his Introduction to The Author to be Let sufficiently shew that he did not wholly refrain from such satire as he afterwards thought very unjust when he was exposed to it himself; for when he was afterwards ridiculed in the character of a distressed poet, he very easily discovered that distress was not a proper subject for merriment, or topic of invective. He was then able to discern that if misery be the effect of virtue it ought to be reverenced; if of ill fortune, to be pitied; and if of vice, not to be

insulted; because it is perhaps itself a punishment adequate to the crime by which it was produced: and the humanity of that man can deserve no panegyric who is capable of reproaching a criminal in the hands of the executioner.

But these reflections, though they readily occurred to him in the first and last parts of his life, were, I am afraid, for a long time forgotten; at least they were, like many other maxims, treasured up in his mind rather for shew then use, and operated very little upon his conduct, however elegantly he might sometimes explain, or however forcibly he might inculcate them.

His degradation, therefore, from the condition which he had enjoyed with such wanton thoughtlessness was considered by many as an occasion of triumph. Those who had before paid their court to him without success, soon returned the contempt which they had suffered; and they who had received favours from him (for of such favours as he could bestow he was very liberal) did not always remember them. So much more certain are the effects of resentment than of gratitude: It is not only to many more pleasing to recollect those faults which place others below them, than those virtues by which they are themselves comparatively depressed, but it is likewise more easy to neglect than to recompence; and though there are few who will practice a laborious virtue, there will ne-

yet be wanting multitudes that will indulge an easy vice.

Savage, however, was very little disturbed at the marks of contempt which his ill fortune brought upon him from those whom he never esteemed, and with whom he never considered himself as levelled by any calamities; and, though it was not without some uneasiness that he saw some, whose friendship he valued, change their behaviour, he yet observed their coldness without much emotion, considered them as the slaves of Fortune and the worshippers of Prosperity, and was more inclined to despise them than to lament himself.

It does not appear that after this return of his wants he found mankind equally favourable to him as at his first appearance in the world. His story, though in reality not less melancholy, was less affecting, because it was no longer new; it therefore procured no new friends, and those that had formerly relieved him thought they might now consign him to others. He was now likewise considered by many rather as criminal than as unhappy; for the friends of Lord Tyrconnel and of his mother were sufficiently industrious to publish his weaknesses, which were indeed very numerous, and nothing was forgotten that might make him either hateful or ridiculous.

It cannot but be imagined that such representations of his faults must make great numbers less

sensible of his distress; many who had only an opportunity to hear one part, made no scruple to propagate the account which they received: many assisted their circulation from malice or revenge, and perhaps many pretended to credit them, that they might with a better grace withdraw their regard or withhold their assistance.

Savage, however, was not one of those who suffered himself to be injured without resistance, nor was less diligent in exposing the faults of Lord Tyrconnel, over whom he obtained at least this advantage, that he drove him first to the practice of outrage and violence; for he was so much provoked by the wit and virulence of Savage, that he came with a number of attendants that did no honour to his courage to beat him at a coffee-house; but it happened that he had left the place a few minutes, and his Lordship had, without danger, the pleasure of boasting how he would have treated him. Mr. Savage went next day to pay a visit at his own house, but was prevailed on by his domestics to retire without insisting upon seeing him.

Lord Tyrconnel was accused by Mr. Savage of some actions which scarcely any provocations will be thought sufficient to justify, such as seizing what he had in his lodgings, and other instances of wanton cruelty, by which he increased the distress of Savage without any advantage to himself.

These mutual accusations were retorted on both

sided for many years with the utmost degree of virulence and rage, and time seemed rather to augment than diminish their resentment. That the anger of Mr. Savage should be kept alive is not strange, because he felt every day the consequences of the quarrel; but it might reasonably have been hoped that Lord Tyrconnel might have relented, and at length have forgot those provocations which, however they might have once inflamed him, had not in reality much hurt him.

The spirit of Mr. Savage, indeed, never suffered him to solicit a reconciliation; he returned reproach for reproach, and insult for insult: his superiority of wit supplied the disadvantages of his fortune, and enabled him to form a party, and prejudice great numbers in his favour.

But though this might be some gratification of his vanity, it afforded very little relief to his necessities, and he was very frequently reduced to uncommon hardships, of which, however, he never made any mean or importunate complaints, being formed rather to bear misery with fortitude, than enjoy prosperity with moderation.

He now thought himself again at liberty to expose the cruelty of his mother, and therefore, I believe, about this time, published The Bastard, a poem remarkable for the vivacious sallies of thought in the beginning, where he makes a pompous enumeration of the imaginary advantages of base birth,

and the pathetic sentiments at the end, where he recounts the real calamities which he suffered by the crime of his parents.

The vigour and spirit of the verses, the peculiar circumstances of the author, the novelty of the subject, and the notoriety of the story to which the allusions are made, procured this performance a very favourable reception; great numbers were immediately dispersed, and editions were multiplied with unusual rapidity.

One circumstance attended the publication which Savage used to relate with great satisfaction. His mother, to whom the poem was, with "due reverence," inscribed, happened then to be at Bath, where she could not conveniently retire from censure, or conceal herself from observation; and no sooner did the reputation of the poem begin to spread than she heard it repeated in all places of concourse, nor could she enter the assembly-rooms, or cross the walks, without being saluted with some lines from The Bastard.

This was perhaps the first time that ever she discovered a sense of shame, and on this occasion the power of wit was very conspicuous; the wretch who had, without scruple, proclaimed herself an adulteress, and who had first endeavoured to starve her son, then to transport him, and afterwards to hang him, was not able to bear the representation of her own conduct, but fled from reproach, though

she felt no pain from guilt, and left Bath with the utmost haste to shelter herself among the crowds of London.

Thus Savage had the satisfaction of finding, that though he could not reform his mother he could punish her, and that he did not always suffer alone.

The pleasure which he received from this increase of his poetical reputation was sufficient, for some time, to overbalance the miseries of want, which this performance did not much alleviate, for it was sold for a very trivial sum to a bookseller, who, though the success was so uncommon that five impressions were sold, of which some were undoubtedly very numerous, had not generosity sufficient to admit the unhappy writer to any part of the profit.

The sale of this poem was always mentioned by Savage with the utmost elevation of heart, and referred to by him as an incontestable proof of a general acknowledgement of his abilities. It was indeed the only production of which he could justly boast a general reception.

But though he did not lose the opportunity which success gave him of setting a high rate on his abilities, but paid due deference to the suffrages of mankind when they were given in his favour, he did not suffer his esteem of himself to depend upon others, nor found any thing sacred in the voice of

the people when they were inclined to censure him; he then readily shewed the folly of expecting that the public should judge right, observed how slowly poetical merit had often forced its way into the world; he contented himself with the applause of men of judgement, and was somewhat disposed to exclude all those from the character of men of judgement who did not applaud him.

But he was at other times more favourable to mankind than to think them blind to the beauties of his Works, and imputed the slowness of their sale to other causes; either they were published at a time when the Town was empty, or when the attention of the public was engrossed in some struggle in the parliament, or some other object of general concern; or they were by the neglect of the publisher not diligently dispersed, or by his avarice not advertised with sufficient frequency. Address, or industry, or liberality, was always wanting; and the blame was laid rather on any other person than the author.

By arts like these, arts which every man practises in some degree, and to which too much of the little tranquillity of life is to be ascribed, Savage was always able to live at peace with himself. Had he indeed only made use of these expedients to alleviate the loss or want of fortune or reputation, or any other advantages which it is not in man's power to bestow upon himself, they might have been justly

mentioned as instances of a philosophical mind, and very properly proposed to the imitation of multitudes who, for want of diverting their imaginations with the same dexterity, languish under afflictions which might be easily removed.

It were, doubtless, to be wished that truth and reason were universally prevalent, that every thing were esteemed according to its real value, and that men would secure themselves from being disappointed in their endeavours after happiness, by placing it only in virtue, which is always to be obtained; but if adventitious and foreign pleasures must be pursued, it would be perhaps of some benefit, since that pursuit must frequently be fruitless, if the practice of Savage could be taught, that folly might be an antidote to folly, and one fallacy might be obviated by another.

But the danger of this pleasing intoxication must not be concealed; nor indeed can any one, after having observed the life of Savage, need to be cautioned against it. By imputing none of his miseries to himself, he continued to act upon the same principles, and to follow the same path; was never made wiser by his sufferings, nor preserved by one misfortune from falling into another. He proceeded throughout his life to tread the same steps on the same circle; always applauding his past conduct, or at least forgetting it, to amuse himself with phantoms of happiness which were dancing before

him, and willingly turned his eyes from the light of reason, when it would have discovered the illusion, and shewn him, what he never wished to see, his real state.

He is even accused, after having lulled his imagination with those ideal opiates, of having tried the same experiment upon his conscience; and having accustomed himself to impute all deviations from the right to foreign causes, it is certain that he was upon every occasion too easily reconciled to himself, and that he appeared very little to regret those practices which had impaired his reputation. The reigning error of his life was, that he mistook the love for the practice of virtue, and was indeed not so much a good man as the friend of goodness.

This at least must be allowed him, that he always preserved a strong sense of the dignity, the beauty, and the necessity of virtue, and that he never contributed deliberately to spread corruption among mankind; his actions, which were generally precipitate, were often blameable; but his Writings, being the productions of Study, uniformly tended to the exaltation of the mind, and the propagation of morality and piety.

These Writings may improve mankind when his failings shall be forgotten, and therefore he must be considered, upon the whole, as a benefactor to the world; nor can his personal example do any hurt, since whoever hears of his faults will hear of

the miseries which they brought upon him, and which would deserve less pity, had not his condition been such as made his faults pardonable. He may be considered as a child exposed to all the temptations of indigence, at an age when resolution was not yet strengthened by conviction, nor virtue confirmed by habit; a circumstance which, in his Bastard, he laments in a very affecting manner;

--------------No Mother's care
Shielded my infant innocence with prayer;
No Father's guardian hand my youth maintain'd,
Call'd forth my virtues, or from vice restrain'd.

The Bastard, however it might provoke or mortify his mother, could not be expected to melt her to compassion, so that he was still under the same want of the necessaries of life, and he therefore exerted all the interest which his wit, or his birth, or his misfortunes, could procure, to obtain, upon the death of Eusden, the place of Poet Laureat, and prosecuted his application with so much diligence, that the King publicly declared it his intention to bestow it upon him; but such was the fate of Savage, that even the King, when he intended his advantage, was disappointed in his schemes; for the Lord Chamberlain, who has the disposal of the laurel, as one of the appendages of his office, either did not know the King's design, or did not approve it, or thought the nomination of the Laureat an en-

croachment upon his rights, and therefore bestowed the laurel upon Colley Cibber.

Mr. Savage, thus disappointed, took a resolution of applying to the queen, that having once given him life, she would enable him to support it, and therefore published a short poem on her birth-day, to which he gave the odd title of Volunteer Laureat. The event of this essay he has himself related in the following letter, which he prefixed to the poem, when he afterwards reprinted it in The Gentleman's Magazine, from whence I have copied it entire, as this was one of the few attempts in which Mr. Savage succeeded.

"MR. URBAN,

"In your Magazine for February you published "the last Volunteer Laureat, written on a very me-"lancholy occasion, the death of the royal patroness "of arts and literature in general, and of the author "of that poem in particular. I now send you the "first that Mr. Savage wrote under that title— "This gentleman, notwithstanding a very consi-"derable interest, being, on the death of Mr. Eus-"den, disappointed of the Laureat's place, wrote "the before mentioned poem, which were no sooner "published but the late Queen sent to a bookseller "for them. The author had not at that time a "friend either to get him introduced, or his poem "presented at court; yet such was the unspeak-"able goodness of that Princess, that, notwith-

"standing this act of ceremony was wanting, in a "few days after publication Mr. Savage received a "bank-bill of fifty pounds, and a gracious mes-"sage from her Majesty, by the Lord North and "Guildford, to this effect, 'That her Majesty 'was highly pleased with the verses; that she took 'particularly kind his lines there relating to the 'King; that he had permission to write annually 'on the same subject; and that he should yearly 'receive the like present, till something better '(which was her Majesty's intention) could be 'done for him.' After this he was permitted to "present one of his annual poems to her Majesty, "had the honour of kissing her hand, and met with "the most gracious reception. Your's," &c.

Such was the performance, and such its reception; a reception which, though by no means unkind, was yet not in the highest degree generous: to chain down the genius of a writer to an annual panegyric shewed in the Queen too much desire of hearing her own praises, and a greater regard to herself than to him on whom her bounty was conferred: it was a kind of avaricious generosity, by which flattery was rather purchased than genius rewarded.

Mrs. Oldfield had formerly given him the same allowance with much more heroic intention; she had no other view than to enable him to prosecute his studies, and to set himself above the want of assist-

ance, and was content with doing good without stipulating for encomiums.

Mr. Savage, however, was not at liberty to make exceptions, but was ravished with the favours which he had received, and probably yet more with those which he was promised: he considered himself now as a favourite of the Queen; and did not doubt but a few annual poems would establish him in some profitable employment.

He therefore assumed the title of Volunteer Laureat, not without some reprehensions from Cibber; who informed him that the title of Laureat was a mark of honour conferred by the King, from whom all honour is derived, and which therefore no man has a right to bestow upon himself; and added, that he might with equal propriety style himself a Volunteer Lord, or Volunteer Baronet. It cannot be denied that the remark was just; but Savage did not think any title which was conferred upon Mr. Cibber so honourable as that the usurpation of it could be imputed to him as an instance of very exorbitant vanity, and therefore continued to write under the same title, and received every year the same reward.

He did not appear to consider these encomiums as tests of his abilities, or as any thing more than annual hints to the Queen of her promise, or acts of ceremony, by the performance of which he was entitled to his pension, and therefore did not labour them with great diligence, or print more than fifty

each year, except that for some of the last years he regularly inserted them in The Gentleman's Magazine, by which they were dispersed over the kingdom.

Of some of them he had himself so low an opinion, that he intended to omit them in the collection of poems for which he printed proposals, and solicited subscriptions; nor can it seem strange that, being confined to the same subject, he should be at some times indolent, and at others unsuccessful; that he should sometimes delay a disagreeable task till it was too late to perform it well; or that he should sometimes repeat the same sentiment on the same occasion, or at others be misled, by an attempt after novelty, to forced conceptions and far-fetched images.

He wrote, indeed, with a double intention, which supplied him with some variety; for his business was to praise the Queen for the favours which he had received, and to complain to her of the delay of those which she had promised: in some of his pieces, therefore, gratitude is predominant, and in some discontent; in some he represents himself as happy in her patronage, and in others as disconsolate to find himself neglected.

Her promise, like other promises made to this unfortunate man, was never performed, though he took sufficient care that it should not be forgotten. The publication of his Volunteer Laureat procured him

no other reward than the regular remittance of fifty pounds.

He was not so depressed by this disappointments as to neglect any opportunity that was offered of advancing his interest. When the Princess Anne was married, he wrote a poem upon her departure, only, as he declared, "because it was expected from him," and he was not willing to bar his own prospects by any appearance of neglect.

He never mentioned any advantage gained by this poem, or any regard that was paid to it, and therefore it is likely that it was considered at court as an act of duty to which he was obliged by his dependance, and which it was therefore not necessary to reward by any new favour; or perhaps the Queen really intended his advancement, and therefore thought it superfluous to lavish presents upon a man whom she intended to establish for life.

About this time not only his hopes were in danger of being frustrated but his pension likewise of being obstructed by an accidental calumny. The writer of The Daily Courant, a paper then published under the direction of the Ministry, charged him with a crime which, though not very great in itself, would have been remarkably invidious in him, and might very justly have incensed the Queen against him. He was accused, by name, of influencing elections against the Court, by appearing at the head

of a Tory mob; nor did the accuser fail to aggravate his crime, by representing it as the effect of the most atrocious ingratitude, and a kind of rebellion against the Queen, who had first preserved him from an infamous death, and afterwards distinguished him by her favour, and supported him by her charity. The charge, as it was open and confident, was likewise by good fortune very particular: the place of the transaction was mentioned, and the whole series of the rioter's conduct related. This exactness made Mr. Savage's vindication easy; he never had in his life seen the place which was declared to be the scene of his wickedness, nor ever had been present in any town when its representatives were chosen. This answer he therefore made haste to publish, with all the circumstances necessary to make it credible, and very reasonably demanded that the accusation should be retracted in the same paper, that he might no longer suffer the imputation of sedition and ingratitude. This demand was likewise pressed by him in a private letter to the author of the paper, who, either trusting to the protection of those, whose defence he had undertaken, or having entertained some personal malice against Mr. Savage, or fearing lest, by retracting so confident an assertion, he should impair the credit of his paper, refused to give him that satisfaction.

Mr. Savage therefore thought it necessary to his

own vindication to prosecute him in the King's Bench; but as he did not find any ill effects from the accusation, having sufficiently cleared his innocence, he thought any farther procedure would have the appearance of revenge, and therefore willingly dropped it.

He saw, soon afterwards, a process commenced in the same court against himself, on an information, in which he was accused of writing and publishing an obscene pamphlet.

It was always Mr. Savage's desire to be distinguished, and when any controversy became popular, he never wanted some reason for engaging in it with great ardour, and appearing at the head of the party which he had chosen. As he was never celebrated for his prudence, he had no sooner taken his side, and informed himself on the chief topics of the dispute, than he took all opportunities of asserting and propagating his principles, without much regard to his own interest, or any other visible design than that of drawing upon himself the attention of mankind.

The dispute between the Bishop of London and the Chancellor is well known to have been for some time the chief topic of political conversation, and therefore Mr. Savage, in pursuance of his character, endeavoured to become conspicuous among the controvertists with which every coffee-house was filled on that occasion. He was an indefatigable opposer of

all the claims of ecclesiastical power, though he did not know on what they were founded, and was therefore no friend to the Bishop of London. But he had another reason for appearing as a warm advocate for Dr. Rundle, for he was the friend of Mr. Foster and Mr. Thomson, who were the friends of Mr. Savage.

Thus remote was his interest in the question, which, however, as he imagined, concerned him so nearly, that it was not sufficient to harangue and dispute, but necessary likewise to write upon it.

He therefore engaged with great ardour in a new poem, called by him The Progress of a Divine, in which he conducts a profligate priest, by all the gradations of wickedness, from a poor curacy in the country to the highest preferments of the church, and describes, with that humour which was natural to him, and that knowledge which was extended to all the diversities of human life, his behaviour in every station, and insinuates that this priest, thus accomplished, found at last a patron in the Bishop of London.

When he was asked, by one of his friends, on what pretence he could charge the Bishop with such an action, he had no more to say than that he had only inverted the accusation, and that he thought it reasonable to believe that he who obstructed the rise of a good man without reason, would for bad reasons promote the exaltation of a villain.

The clergy were universally provoked by this sa-

tire, and Savage, who as was his constant practice, had set his name to his performance, was censured in The Weekly Miscellany * with severity, which he did not seem inclined to forget.

* A short satire was likewise published, in the same paper, in which were the following lines:

For cruel murder doom'd to hempen death,
Savage, by royal grace, prolong'd his breath.
Well might you think he spent his future years
In pray'r and fasting, and repentant tears.
----But, O, vain hope!---The truly Savage cries,
"Priests and their slavish doctrines I despise.
"Shall I
"Who, by free thinking to free actions fir'd,
"In midnight brawls a deathless name acquir'd,
"Now stoop to learn of ecclesiastic men?---
"---No, arm'd with rhyme, at priests I'll take my aim,
"Tho' Prudence bids me murder but their fame.

WEEKLY MISCELLANY.

An answer was published in The Gentleman's Magazine, written by an unknown hand, from which the following lines are selected.

Transform'd by thoughtless rage and midnight wine,
From malice free, and push'd without design,
In equal brawl if Savage lung'd a thrust,
And brought the youth a victim to the dust,
So strong the hand of Accident appears,
The royal hand from guilt and vengeance clears.
Instead of wasting "all thy future years,
"Savage! in pray'r and vain repentant tears,"
Exert thy pen to mend a vicious age,
To curb the priest, and sink his high-church rage;
To shew what frauds the holy vestments hide,
The nests of av'rice, lust, and pedant pride;
Then change the scene, let merit brightly shine,
And round the patriot twist the wreath divine;
The heavenly guide deliver down to fame;
In well-tun'd lays transmit a Foster's name:
Touch ev'ry passion with harmonious art,
Exalt the genius, and correct the heart.

But a return of invective was not thought a sufficient punishment: the Court of King's Bench was therefore moved against him, and he was obliged to return an answer to a charge of obscenity. It was urged, in his defence, that obscenity was criminal when it was intended to promote the practice of vice, but that Mr. Savage had only introduced obscene ideas with the view of exposing them to detestation, and of amending the age, by shewing the deformity of wickedness. This plea was admitted, and Sir Philip Yorke, who then presided in that court, dismissed the information with encomiums upon the purity and excellence of Mr. Savage's Writings.

The prosecution, however, answered, in some measure, the purpose of those by whom it was set on foot: for Mr. Savage was so far intimidated by it, that when the edition of his poem was sold he did not venture to reprint it; so that it was in a short time forgotten, or forgotten by all but those whom it offended.

It is said that some endeavours were used to incense the Queen against him, but he found advocates to obviate at least part of their effect; for

Thus future times shall royal grace extol;
Thus polish'd lines thy present fame enrol.
—But grant
—Maliciously that Savage plung'd the steel,
And made the youth its shining vengeance feel,
My soul abhors the act the man detests,
But more the bigotry in priestly breasts.
GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, May 1735.

though he was never advanced he still continued to receive his pension.

This poem drew more infamy upon him than any incident of his life; and as his conduct cannot be vindicated, it is proper to secure his memory from reproach, by informing those whom he made his enemies that he never intended to repeat the provocation; and that, though whenever he thought he had any reason to complain of the clergy he used to threaten them with a new edition of the Progress of a Divine, it was his calm and settled resolution to suppress it for ever.

He once intended to have made a better reparation for the folly or injustice with which he might be charged, by writing another poem called The Progress of a Freethinker, whom he intended to lead through all the stages of vice and folly, to convert him from virtue to wickedness, and from religion to infidelity, by all the modish sophistry used for that purpose, and at last to dismiss him by his own hand into the other world.

That he did not execute this design is a real loss to mankind; for he was too well acquainted with all the scenes of debauchery to have failed in its representation of them, and too zealous for virtue not to have represented them in such a manner as should expose them either to ridicule or detestation.

But this plan was, like others, formed and laid aside till the vigour of his imagination was spent,

and the effervescence of invention had subsided, but soon gave way to some other design which pleased by its novelty for a while, and then was neglected like the former.

He was still in his usual exigencies, having no certain support but the pension allowed him by the Queen, which, though it might have kept an exact economist from want, was very far from being sufficient for Mr. Savage, who had never been accustomed to dismiss any of his appetites without the gratification which they solicited, and whom nothing but want of money with-held from partaking of every pleasure that fell within his view.

His conduct with regard to his pension was very particular: no sooner had he changed the bill than he vanished from the sight of all his acquintances, and lay for some time out of the reach of all the inquiries that Friendship or Curiosity could make after him; at length he appeared again pennyless as before, but never informed even those whom he seemed to regard most where he had been, nor was his retreat ever discovered.

This was his constant practice during the whole time that he received the pension from the Queen: he regularly disappeared and returned. He indeed affirmed that he retired to study, and that the money supported him in solitude for many months; but his friends declared that the short time in which it

was spent, sufficiently confuted his own account of his conduct.

His politeness and his wit still raised him friends, who were desirous of setting him at length free from that indigence by which he had been hitherto oppressed, and therefore solicited Sir Robert Walpole in his favour with so much earnestness, that they obtained a promise of the next place that should become vacant, not exceeding two hundred pounds a-year. This promise was made with an uncommon declaration, "that it was not the promise of a minister to a petitioner, but of a friend to his friend."

Mr. Savage now concluded himself set at ease for ever, and as he observes in a poem written on that incident of his life, trusted and was trusted, but soon found that his confidence was ill-grounded, and this friendly promise was not inviolable. He spent a long time in solicitations, and at last despaired and desisted.

He did not indeed deny that he had given the minister some reason to believe that he should not strengthen his own interest by advancing him, for he had taken care to distinguish himself in coffee-houses as an advocate for the ministry of the last years of Queen Anne, and was always ready to justify the conduct, and exalt the character, of Lord Bolingbroke, whom he mentions with great regard in an Epistle upon authors, which he wrote about

that time, but was too wise to publish, and of which only some fragments have appeared, inserted by him in the Magazine after his retirement.

To despair was not, however, the character of Savage: when one patronage failed he had recourse to another. The Prince was now extremely popular, and had very liberally rewarded the merit of some writers whom Mr. Savage did not think superior to himself, and therefore he resolved to address a poem to him.

For this purpose he made choice of a subject which could regard only persons of the highest rank and greatest affluence, and which was therefore proper for a poem intended to procure the patronage of a prince; and having retired for some time to Richmond, that he might prosecute his design in full tranquillity, without the temptations of pleasure or the solicitations of creditors, by which his meditations were in equal danger of being disconcerted, he produced a poem on Public Spirit with regard to Public Works.

The plan of this poem is very extensive, and comprises a multitude of topics, each of which might furnish matter sufficient for a long performance, and of which some have already employed more eminent writers; but as he was perhaps not fully acquainted with the whole extent of his own design, and was writing to obtain a supply of wants too pressing to admit of long or accurate inquiries,

he passes negligently over many public works which, even in his own opinion, deserved to be more elaborately treated.

But though he may sometimes disappoint his reader by transient touches upon these subjects, which have often been considered, and therefore naturally raise expectations, he must be allowed amply to compensate his omissions, by expatiating in the conclusion of his work upon a kind of beneficence not yet celebrated by any eminent poet, though it now appears more susceptible of embellishments, more adapted to exalt the ideas, and affect the passions, than many of those which have hitherto been thought most worthy of the ornaments of verse. The settlement of colonies in uninhabited countries, the establishment of those in security whose misfortunes have made their own country no longer pleasing or safe, the acquisition of property without injury to any, the appropriation of the waste and luxuriant bounties of Nature, and the enjoyment of those gifts which Heaven has scattered upon regions uncultivated and unoccupied, cannot be considered without giving rise to a great number of pleasing ideas, and bewildering the imagination in delightful prospects; and therefore whatever speculations they may produce in those who have confined themselves to political studies, naturally fixed the attention and excited the applause of a poet. The politician, when he considers men driven into other countries for shelter,

and obliged to retire to forests and deserts, and pass their lives and fix their posterity in the remotest corners of the world, to avoid those hardships which they suffer or fear in their native place, may very properly inquire why the legislature does not provide a remedy for these miseries, rather then encourage an escape from them. He may conclude that the flight of every honest man is a loss to the community, that those who are unhappy without guilt ought to be relieved, and the life which is overburthened by accidental calamities set at ease by the care of the public; and that those who have, by misconduct, forfeited their claim to favour, ought rather to be made useful to the society which they have injured than be driven from it. But the poet is employed in a more pleasing undertaking than that of proposing laws which, however just or expedient, will never be made, or endeavouring to reduce to rational schemes of government societies which were formed by chance, and are conducted by the private passions of those who preside in them. He guides the unhappy fugitive from want and persecution to plenty, quiet, and security, and seats him in scenes of peaceful solitude and undisturbed repose.

Savage has not forgotten, amidst the pleasing sentiments which this prospect of retirement suggested to him, to censure those crimes which have been generally committed by the discoverers of new

regions, and to expose the enormous wickedness of making war upon barbarous nations because they cannot resist, and of invading countries because they are fruitful; of extending navigation only to propagate vice, and of visiting distant lands only to lay them waste. He has asserted the natural equality of mankind, and endeavoured to suppress that pride which inclines men to imagine that right is the consequence of power.

His description of the various miseries which force men to seek for refuge in distant countries, affords another instance of his proficiency in the important and extensive study of human life, and the tenderness with which he recounts them another proof of his humanity and benevolence.

It is observable that the close of this poem discovers a change which experience had made in Mr. Savage's opinions. In a poem written by him in his youth, and published in his Miscellanies, he declares his contempt of the contracted views and narrow prospects of the middle state of life, and declares his resolution either to tower like the cedar, or be trampled like the shrub; but in this poem, though addressed to a prince, he mentions this state of life as comprising those who ought most to attract reward, those who merit most the confidence of power and the familiarity of greatness; and, accidentally mentioning this passage to one of his friends, declared, that in his opinion all the virtue

of mankind was comprehended in that state.

In describing villas and gardens he did not omit to condemn that absurd custom, which prevails among the English, of permitting servants to receive money from strangers for the entertainment that they receive, and therefore inserted in his poem these lines:

> But what the flow'ring pride of gardens rare,
> However royal, or however fair,
> If gates, which to access should still give way,
> Ope but, like Peter's Paradise, for pay?
> If perquisited varlets frequent stand,
> And each new walk must a new tax demand?
> What foreign eye but with contempt surveys?
> What Muse shall from oblivion snatch their praise?

But before the publication of his performance he recollected that the Queen allowed her garden and cave at Richmond to be shewn for money, and that she so openly countenanced the practice, that she had bestowed the privilege of shewing them as a place of profit on a man whose merit she valued herself upon rewarding, though she gave him only the liberty of disgracing his country.

He therefore thought, with more prudence than was often exerted by him, that the publication of these lines might be officiously represented as an insult upon the Queen, to whom he owed his life and his subsistence, and that the propriety of his observation would be no security against the censures which the unseasonableness of it might

draw upon him; he therefore suppressed the passage in the first edition, but after the Queen's death thought the same caution no longer necessary, and restored it to the proper place.

The poem was therefore published without any political faults, and inscribed to the Prince: but Mr. Savage, having no friend upon whom he could prevail to present it to him, had no other method of attracting his observation than the publication of frequent advertisements, and therefore received no reward from his patron, however generous on other occasions.

This disappointment he never mentioned without indignation, being by some means or other confident that the Prince was not ignorant of his address to him, and insinuated, that if any advances in popularity could have been made by distinguishing him, he had not written without notice or without reward.

He was once inclined to have presented his poem in person, and sent to the printer for a copy with that design; but either his opinion changed or his resolution deserted him, and he continued to resent neglect without attempting to force himself into regard.

Nor was the public much more favourable than his patron, for only seventy-two were sold, though the performance was much commended by some whose judgement in that kind of writing is generally allowed. But Savage easily reconciled him-

self to mankind without imputing any defect to his work, by observing that his poem was unluckily published two days after the prorogation of the parliament, and by consequence at a time when all those who could be expected to regard it were in the hurry of preparing for their departure, or engaged in taking leave of others upon their dismission from public affairs.

It must be, however, allowed, in justification of the public, that this performance is not the most excellent of Mr. Savage's works; and that though it cannot be denied to contain many striking sentiments, majestic lines, and just observations, it is in general not sufficiently polished in the language, or enlivened in the imagery, or digested in the plan.

Thus his poem contributed nothing to the alleviation of his poverty, which was such as very few could have supported with equal patience, but to which it must likewise be confessed that few would have been exposed who received punctually fifty pounds a-year; a salary which, though by no means equal to the demands of vanity and luxury, is yet found sufficient to support families above want, and was undoubtedly more than the necessities of life require.

But no sooner had he received his pension than he withdrew to his darling privacy, from which he returned in a short time to his former distress, and for some part of the year generally lived by chance,

eating only when he was invited to the tables of his acquaintances, from which the meanness of his dress often excluded him, when the politeness and variety of his conversation would have been thought a sufficient recompence for his entertainment.

He lodged as much by accident as he dined, and passed the night sometimes at mean houses which are set open at night to any casual wanderers, sometimes in cellars among the riot and filth of the meanest and most profligate of the rabble; and sometimes, when he had not money to support even the expences of these receptacles, walked about the streets till he was weary, and lay down on the summer upon a bulk, or in the winter, with his associates in poverty, among the ashes of a glasshouse.

In this manner were passed those days and those nights which Nature had enabled him to have employed in elevated speculations, useful studies, or pleasing conversation. On a bulk, in a cellar, or in a glasshouse, among thieves and beggars, was to be found the Author of The Wanderer, the man of exalted sentiments, extensive views, and curious observations! the man whose remarks on life might have assisted the statesman, whose ideas of virtue might have enlightened the moralist, whose eloquence might have influenced senates, and whose delicacy might have polished courts!

It cannot but be imagined that such necessities

might sometimes force him upon disreputable practices, and it is probable that these lines in The Wanderer were occasioned by his reflections on his own conduct.

> Tho' mis'ry leads to happiness and truth,
> Unequal to the load, this languid youth,
> (O let none censure if, untry'd by grief,
> If amidst woe, untempted by relief)
> He stoop'd reluctant to low arts of shame,
> Which then, ev'n then, he scorn'd, and blush'd to name.

Whoever was acquainted with him was certain to be solicited for small sums, which the frequency of the request made in time considerable, and he was therefore quickly shunned by those who were become familiar enough to be trusted with his necessities; but his rambling manner of life, and constant appearance at houses of public resort, always procured him a new succession of friends, whose kindness had not been exhausted by repeated requests, so that he was seldom absolutely without resources, but had in his utmost exigencies this comfort, that he always imagined himself sure of speedy relief.

It was observed that he always asked favours of this kind without the least submission or apparent consciousness of dependance, and that he did not seem to look upon a compliance with his request as an obligation that deserved any extraordinary acknowledgements, but a refusal was resented by him as an affront, or complained of as an injury; nor

did he readily reconcile himself to those who either denied to lend, or gave him afterwards any intimation that they expected to be repaid.

He was sometimes so far compassionated by those who knew both his merit and distresses, that they received him into their families, but they soon discovered him to be a very incommodious inmate; for being always accustomed to an irregular manner of life, he could not confine himself to any stated hours, or pay any regard to the rules of a family, but would prolong his conversation till midnight, without considering that business might require his friend's application in the morning; and when he had persuaded himself to retire to bed, was not without equal difficulty called up to dinner; it was therefore impossible to pay him any distinction without the entire subversion of all economy, a kind of establishment which, wherever he went, he always appeared ambitious to overthrow.

It must therefore be acknowledged, in justification of mankind, that it was not always by the negligence or coldness of his friends that Savage was distressed, but because it was in reality very difficult to preserve him long in a state of ease. To supply him with money was a hopeless attempt; for no sooner did he see himself master of a sum sufficient to set him free from care for a day than he became profuse and luxurious. When once he had entered a tavern, or engaged in a scheme of

pleasure, he never retired till want of money obliged him to some new expedient. If he was entertained in a family, nothing was any longer to be regarded there but amusements and jollity; wherever Savage entered he immediately expected that order and business should fly before him, that all should thenceforward be left to hazard, and that no dull principle of domestic management should be opposed to his inclination, or intrude upon his gaiety.

His distresses, however afflictive, never dejected him; in his lowest state he wanted not spirit to assert the natural dignity of wit, and was always ready to repress that insolence which superiority of fortune incited, and to trample that reputation which rose upon any other basis than that of merit: He never admitted any gross familiarities, or submitted to be treated otherwise than as an equal. Once, when he was without lodging, meat, or clothes, one of his friends, a man not indeed remarkable for moderation in his prosperity, left a message that he desired to see him about nine in the morning. Savage knew that his intention was to assist him, but was very much disgusted that he should presume to prescribe the hour of his attendance, and, I believe, refused to visit him, and rejected his kindness.

The same invincible temper, whether firmness or obstinacy, appeared in his conduct to the Lord Tyrconnel, from whom he very frequently demanded

that the allowance which was once paid him should be restored, but with whom he never appeared to entertain for a moment the thought of soliciting a reconciliation, and whom he treated at once with all the haughtiness of superiority and all the bitterness of resentment. He wrote to him not in a style of supplication or respect, but of reproach, menace, and contempt; and appeared determined, if he ever regained his allowance, to hold it only by the right of conquest.

As many more can discover that a man is richer than that he is wiser than themselves, superiority of understanding is not so readily acknowledged as that of fortune; nor is that haughtiness which the consciousness of great abilities incites borne with the same submission as the tyranny of affluence; and therefore Savage, by asserting his claim to deference and regard, and by treating those with contempt whom better fortune animated to rebel against him, did not fail to raise a great number of enemies in the different classes of mankind. Those who thought themselves raised above him by the advantages of riches hated him because they found no protection from the petulance of his wit; those who were esteemed for their writings feared him as a critic, and maligned him as a rival, and almost all the smaller wits were his professed enemies.

Among these Mr. Millar so far indulged his resentment as to introduce him in a farce, and direct

him to be personated on the stage in a dress like that which he then wore; a mean insult! which only insinuated that Savage had but one coat, and which was therefore despised by him rather than resented; for though he wrote a lampoon against Millar he never printed it: and as no other person ought to prosecute that revenge from which the person who was injured desisted, I shall not preserve what Mr. Savage suppressed, of which the publication would indeed have been a punishment too severe for so impotent an assault.

The great hardships of poverty were to Savage not the want of lodging or of food, but the neglect and contempt which it drew upon him. He complained that as his affairs grew desperate he found his reputation for capacity visibly decline; that his opinion in questions of criticism was no longer regarded when his coat was out of fashion; and that those who in the interval of his prosperity were always encouraging him to great undertakings, by encomiums on his genius, and assurances of his success, now received any mention of his designs with coldness; thought that the subjects on which he proposed to write were very difficult; and were ready to inform him that the event of a poem was uncertain; that an author ought to employ much time in the consideration of his plan, and not presume to sit down to write in confidence of a few cursory ideas and a superficial knowledge: difficul-

ties were started on all sides, and he was no longer qualified for any performance but The Volunteer Laureat.

Yet even this kind of contempt never depressed him; for he always preserved a steady confidence in his own capacity, and believed nothing above his reach which he should at any time earnestly endeavour to attain. He formed schemes of the same kind with regard to knowledge and to fortune, and flattered himself with advances to be made in science as with riches to be enjoyed in some distant period of his life. For the acquisition of knowledge he was indeed far better qualified than for that of riches, for he was naturally inquisitive, and desirous of the conversation of those from whom any information was to be obtained, but by no means solicitous to improve those opportunities that were sometimes offered of raising his fortune; and he was remarkably retentive of his ideas, which, when once he was in possession of them, rarely forsook him; a quality which could never be communicated to his money.

While he was thus wearing out his life in expectation that the Queen, would some time recollect her promise, he had recourse to the usual practice of writers, and published proposals for printing his Works by subscription, to which he was encouraged by the success of many who had not a better right to the favour of the public; but, whatever

was the reason, he did not find the world equally inclined to favour him; and he observed, with some discontent, that though he offered his Works at half a guinea, he was able to procure but a small number in comparison with those who subscribed twice as much to Duck.

Nor was it without indignation that he saw his proposals neglected by the Queen, who patronized Mr. Duck's with uncommon ardour, and incited a competition among those who attended the court who should most promote his interest, and who should first offer a subscription. This was a distinction to which Mr. Savage made no scruple of asserting that his birth, his misfortunes, and his genius, gave him a fairer title than could be pleaded by him on whom it was conferred.

Savage's applications were, however, not universally unsuccessful, for some of the nobility countenanced his design, encouraged his proposals, and subscribed with great liberality; he related of the Duke of Chandos particularly, that upon receiving his proposals he sent him ten guineas.

But the money which his subscriptions afforded him was not less volatile than that which he received from his other schemes; whenever a subscription was paid him he went to a tavern, and as money so collected is necessarily received in amall sums, he never was able to send his poems to the press, but

for many years continued his solicitation, and squandered whatever he obtained.

This project of printing his Works was frequently revived; and as his proposals grew obsolete new ones were printed with fresher dates. To form schemes for the publication was one of his favourite amusements, nor was he ever more at ease than when, with any friend who readily fell in with his schemes, he was adjusting the print, forming the advertisements, and regulating the dispersion of his new edition, which he really intended some time to publish, and which, as long as experience had shewn him the impossibility of printing the volume together, he at last determined to divide into weekly or monthly numbers, that the profits of the first might supply the expences of the next.

Thus he spent his time in mean expedients and tormenting suspense, living for the greatest past in fear of prosecutions from his creditors, and, consequently, sculking in obscure parts of the Town, of which he was no stranger to the remotest corners. But wherever he came his address secured him friends, whom his necessities soon alienated, so that he had perhaps a more numerous acquaintance than any man ever before attained, there being scarcely any person eminent on any account to whom he was not known, or whose character he was not in some degree able to delineate.

To the acquisition of this extensive acquaintance every circumstance of his life contributed: he excelled in the arts of conversation, and therefore willingly practised them: he had seldom any home, or even a lodging, in which he could be private, and therefore was driven into public-houses for the common conveniences of life, and supports of nature: he was always ready to comply with every invitation, having no employment to with-hold him, and often no money to provide for himself; and by dining with one company he never failed of obtaining an introduction into another.

Thus dissipated was his life, and thus casual his subsistence; yet did not the distraction of his views hinder him from reflection, nor the uncertainty of his condition, depress his gaiety. When he had wandered about without any fortunate adventure, by which he was led into a tavern, he sometimes retired into the fields, and was able to employ his mind in study, or amuse it with pleasing imaginations, and seldom appeared to be melancholy, but when some sudden misfortune had just fallen upon him, and even then, in a few moments, he would disentangle himself from his perplexity, adopt the subject of conversation, and apply his mind wholly to the objects that others presented to it.

This life, unhappy as it may be already imagined, was yet imbittered in 1738 with new calamities. The death of the Queen deprived him of all the

prospects of preferment with which he so long entertained his imagination; and as Sir Robert Walpole had before given him reason to believe that he never intended the performance of his promise, he was now abandoned again to fortune.

He was, however, at that time supported by a friend; and as it was not his custom to look out for distant calamities, or to feel any other pain than that which forced itself upon his senses, he was not much afflicted at his loss, and perhaps comforted himself that his pension would be now continued without the annual tribute of a panegyric.

Another expectation contributed likewise to support him; he had taken a resolution to write a second tragedy upon the story of Sir Thomas Overbury, in which he preserved a few lines of his former play, but made a total alteration of the plan, added new incidents, and introduced new characters; so that it was a new tragedy, not a revival of the former.

Many of his friends blamed him for not making choice of another subject; but, in vindication of himself, he asserted that it was not easy to find a better, and that he thought it his interest to extinguish the memory of the first tragedy, which he could only do by writing one less defective upon the same story, by which he should entirely defeat the artifice of the booksellers, who, after the death of any author of reputation, are always industrious to

swell his works, by uniting his worst productions with his best.

In the execution of this scheme, however, he proceeded but slowly, and probably only employed himself upon it when he could find no other amusement; but he pleased himself with counting the profits, and perhaps imagined that the theatrical reputation which he was about to acquire would be equivalent to all that he had lost by the death of his patroness.

He did not, in confidence of his approaching riches, neglect the measures proper to secure the continuance of his pension, though some of his favourers thought him culpable for omitting to write on her death; but on her birth-day next year he gave a proof of the solidity of his judgement and the power of his genius. He knew that the track of elegy had been so long beaten that it was impossible to travel in it without treading in the footsteps of those who had gone before him, and that therefore it was necessary, that he might distinguish himself from the herd of encomiasts, to find out some new walk of funeral panegyric.

This difficult task he performed in such a manner, that his poem may be justly ranked among the best pieces that the death of princes has produced. By transferring the mention of her death to her birth-day he has formed a happy combination of topics, which any other man would have thought it

very difficult to connect in one view, but which he has united in such a manner, that the relation between them appears natural; and it may be justly said, that what no other man would have thought on it now appears scarcely possible for any man to miss.

The beauty of this peculiar combination of images is so masterly that it is sufficient to set this poem above censure; and therefore it is not necessary to mention many other delicate touches which may be found in it, and which would deservedly be admired in any other performance.

To these proofs of his genius may be added, from the same poem, an instance of his prudence, an excellence for which he was not so often distinguished; he does not forget to remind the King, in the most delicate, and artful manner, of continuing his pension.

With regard to the success of this address he was for some time in suspense, but was in no great degree solicitous about it, and continued his labour upon his new tragedy with great tranquillity, till the friend who had for a considerable time supported him, removing his family to another place, took occasion to dismiss him. It then became necessary to inquire more diligently what was determined in his affair, having reason to suspect that no great favour was intended him, because he had not received his pension at the usual time,

and gave him hopes, that in a short time he should find himself supplied with a competence "without "any dependance on those little creatures, which "we are pleased to call The Great."

The scheme proposed for this happy and independent subsistence was, that he should retire into Wales, and receive an allowance of fifty pounds a-year, to be raised by a subscription, on which he was to live privately, in a cheap place, without aspiring any more to affluence, or having any farther care of reputation.

This offer Mr. Savage gladly accepted, though with intentions very different from those of his friends; for they proposed that he should continue an exile from London for ever, and spend all the remaining part of his life at Swansea; but he designed only to take the opportunity which their scheme offered him of retreating for a short time, that he might prepare his play for the stage, and his other Works for the press, and then to return to London to exhibit his tragedy, and live upon the profits of his own labour.

With regard to his Works, he proposed very great improvements, which would have required much time, or great application; and when he had finished them he designed to do justice to his subscribers by publishing them, according to his proposals.

As he was ready to entertain himself with future

pleasures, he had planned out a scheme of life for the country, of which he had no knowledge but from pastorals and songs. He imagined that he should be transported to scenes of flowery felicity, like those which one poet has reflected to another; and had projected a perpetual round of innocent pleasures, of which he suspected no interruption from pride, or ignorance, or brutality.

With these expectations he was so enchanted, that when he was once gently reproached by a friend for submitting to live upon a subscription, and advised rather by a resolute exertion of his abilities to support himself, he could not bear to debar himself from the happiness which was to be found in the calm of a cottage, or lose the opportunity of listening, without intermission, to the melody of the nightingale, which he believed was to be heard from every bramble, and which he did not fail to mention as a very important part of the happiness of a country life.

While this scheme was ripening his friends directed him to take a lodging in the liberties of the Fleet, that he might be secure from his creditors, and sent him every Monday a guinea, which he commonly spent before the next morning, and trusted, after his usual manner, the remaining part of the week to the bounty of Fortune.

He now began very sensibly to feel the miseries of dependence: those by whom he was to be supported

It is said that he did not take those methods of retrieving his interest which were most likely to succeed, and some of those who were employed in the Exchequer cautioned him against too much violence in his proceedings; but Mr. Savage, who seldom regulated his conduct by the advice of others, gave way to his passion, and demanded of Sir Robert Walpole, at his levee, the reason of the distinction that was made between him and the other pensioners of the Queen with a degree of roughness, which perhaps determined him to withdraw what had been only delayed.

Whatever was the crime of which he was accused or suspected, and whatever influence was employed against him, he received soon after an account that took from him all hopes of regaining his pension; and he had now no prospect of subsistence but from his play, and he knew no way of living for the time required to finish it.

So peculiar were the misfortunes of this man, deprived of an estate and title by a particular law, exposed and abandoned by a mother, defrauded by a mother of a fortune which his father had allotted him, he entered the world without a friend; and though his abilities forced themselves into esteem and reputation, he was never able to obtain any real advantage, and whatever prospects arose were always intercepted as he began to approach them. The King's intentions in his favour were frustrated; his

Dedication to the Prince, whose generosity on every other occasion was eminent, procured him no reward; Sir Robert Walpole, who valued himself upon keeping his promise to others, broke it to him without regret; and the bounty of the Queen was, after her death, withdrawn from him, and from him only.

Such were his misfortunes, which yet he bore not only with decency but with cheerfulness, nor was his gaiety clouded even by his last disappointments, though he was in a short time reduced to the lowest degree of distress, and often wanted both lodging and food. At this time he gave another instance of the unsurmountable obstinacy of his spirit; his clothes were worn out, and he received notice that at a coffee-house some clothes and linen were left for him; the person who sent them did not, I believe, inform him to whom he was to be obliged, that he might spare the perplexity of acknowledging the benefit; but though the offer was so far generous it was made with some neglect of ceremonies, which Mr. Savage so much resented that he refused the present, and declined to enter the house till the clothes that had been designed for him were taken away.

His distress was now publicly known, and his friends, therefore, thought it proper to concert some measures for his relief; and one of them wrote a letter to him, in which he expressed his concern "for the miserable withdrawing of his pension;"

began to prescribe to him with an air of authority, when he knew not how decently to resent nor patiently to bear; and he soon discovered, from the conduct of most of his subscribers, that he was yet in the hands of "little creatures."

Of the insolence that he was obliged to suffer he gave many instances, of which none appeared to raise his indignation to a greater height than the method which was taken of furnishing him with clothes. Instead of consulting him, and allowing him to send a tailor his orders for what they thought proper to allow him, they proposed to send for a tailor to take his measure, and then to consult how they should equip him.

This treatment was not very delicate, nor was it such as Savage's humanity would have suggested to him on a like occasion; but it had scarcely deserved mention had it not, by affecting him in an uncommon degree, shewn the peculiarity of his character. Upon hearing the design that was formed he came to the lodging of a friend with the most violent agonies of rage, and being asked what it could be that gave him such disturbance, he replied with the utmost vehemence of indignation, "that they had sent "for a tailor to measure him."

How the affair ended was never inquired for fear of renewing his uneasiness. It is probable that, upon recollection, he submitted with a good grace

to what he could not avoid, and that he discovered no resentment where he had no power.

He was, however, not humbled to implicit and universal compliance; for when the gentleman who had first informed him of the design to support him by a subscription attempted to procure a reconciliation with the Lord Tyrconnel, he could by no means be prevailed upon to comply with the measures that were proposed.

A letter was written for him to Sir William Lemon, to prevail upon him to interpose his good offices with Lord Tyrconnel, in which he solicited Sir William's assistance "for a man who really needed "it as much as any man could well do;" and informed him that he was retiring "for ever to a place "where he should no more trouble his relations, "friends, or enemies;" he confessed that his passion had betrayed him to some conduct with regard to Lord Tyrconnel "for which he could not but "heartily ask his pardon;" and as he imagined Lord Tyrconnel's passion might be yet so high that he would not "receive a letter from him," begged that Sir William would endeavour to soften him; and expressed his hopes that he would comply with his request, and that "so small a relation would "not harden his heart against him."

That any man should presume to dictate a letter to him was not very agreeable to Mr. Savage, and therefore he was, before he had opened it, not much

inclined to approve it; but when he read it he found it contained sentiments entirely opposite to his own, and, as he asserted, to the truth; and therefore, instead of copying it, wrote his friend a letter full of masculine resentment and warm expostulations. He very justly observed that the style was too supplicatory, and the representation too abject, and that he ought at least to have made him complain with "the "dignity of a gentleman in distress." He declared, that he would not write the paragraph in which he was to ask Lord Tyrconnel's pardon, for "he despi-"sed his pardon, and therefore could not heartily, "and would not hypocritically, ask it." He remarked, that his friend made a very unreasonable distinction between himself and him; for, says he, when you mention men of high rank "in your own "character," they "are those little creatures whom "we are pleased to call The Great;" but when you address them "in mine," no servility is sufficiently humble. He then, with great propriety, explained the ill consequences which might be expected from such a letter, which his relations would print in their own defence, and which would for ever be produced as a full answer to all that he should allege against them; for he always intended to publish a minute account of the treatment which he had received. It is to be remembered, to the honour of the gentleman by whom this letter was drawn up, that he yielded to Mr. Savage's reasons, and agreed that it ought to be suppressed.

After many alterations and delays a subscription was at length raised, which did not amount to fifty pounds a-year, though twenty were paid by one gentleman; such was the generosity of mankind, that what had been done by a player without solicitation could not now be effected by application and interest! and Savage had a great number to court and to obey for a pension less than that which Mrs. Oldfield paid him without exacting any servilities!

Mr. Savage, however, was satisfied, and willing to retire, and was convinced that the allowance, though scanty, would be more than sufficient for him, being now determined to commence a rigid economist, and to live according to the exactest rules of frugality; for nothing was in his opinion more contemptible than a man who, when he knew his income, exceeded it: and yet he confessed that instances of such folly were too common, and lamented that some men were not to be trusted with their own money.

Full of these salutary resolutions he left London in July 1739, having taken leave, with great tenderness, of his friends, and parted from the Author of this Narrative with tears in his eyes. He was furnished with fifteen guineas, and informed, that they would be sufficient not only for the expence of his journey but for his support in Wales for some time; and that there remained but little more of the first collection. He promised a strict adherence to his

maxims of parsimony, and went away in the stage-coach; nor did his friends expect to hear from him till he informed them of his arrival at Swansea.

But when they least expected arrived a letter, dated the 14th day after his departure, in which he sent them word that he was yet upon the road, and without money, and that he therefore could not proceed without a remittance. They then sent him the money that was in their hands, with which he was enabled to reach Bristol, from whence he was to go to Swansea by water.

At Bristol he found an embargo laid upon the shipping, so that he could not immediately obtain a passage: and being therefore obliged to stay there some time, he, with his usual felicity, ingratiated himself with many of the principal inhabitants, was invited to their houses, distinguished at their public feasts, and treated with a regard that gratified his vanity, and therefore easily engaged his affection.

He began very early after his retirement to complain of the conduct of his friends in London, and irritated many of them so much by his letters that they withdrew, however honourably, their contributions; and it is believed that little more was paid him than the twenty pounds a-year which were allowed him by the gentleman who proposed the subscription.

After some stay at Bristol he retired to Swansea, the place originally proposed for his residence, where

he lived about a year very much dissatisfied with the diminution of his salary; but contracted, as in other places, acquaintance with those who were most distinguished in that country, among whom he has celebrated Mr. Powell and Mrs. Jones, by some verses, which he inserted in the Gentleman's Magazine.

Here he completed his tragedy, of which two acts were wanting when he left London, and was desirous of coming to town to bring it upon the stage. This design was very warmly opposed, and he was advised by his chief benefactor to put it into the hands of Mr. Thomson and Mr. Mallet, that it might be fitted for the stage, and to allow his friends to receive the profits; out of which an annual pension should be paid him.

This proposal he rejected with the utmost contempt. He was by no means convinced that the judgment of those to whom he was required to submit was superior to his own. He was now determined, as he expressed it, to be "no longer kept "in leading-strings," and had no elevated idea of "his bounty" who proposed to "pension him out "of the profits of his own labour."

He attempted, in Wales, to promote a subscription for his works, and had once hopes of success; but in a short time afterwards formed a resolution of leaving that part of the country, to which he thought it not reasonable to be confined for the gra-

tification of those who, having promised him a liberal income, had no sooner banished him to a remote corner than they reduced his allowance to a salary scarcely equal to the necessities of life.

His resentment of this treatment, which, in his own opinion at least, he had not deserved, was such that he broke off all correspondence with most of his contributors, and appeared to consider them as persecutors and oppressors; and in the latter part of his life declared, that their conduct towards him since his departure from London "had been perfidiousness improving on perfidiousness, and inhumanity on inhumanity."

It is not to be supposed that the necessities of Mr. Savage did not sometimes excite him to satirical exaggerations of the behaviour of those by whom he thought himself reduced to them; but it must be granted that the diminution of his allowance was a great hardship, and that those who withdrew their subscription from a man who, upon the faith of their promise, had gone into a kind of banishment, and abandoned all those by whom he had been before relieved in his distresses, will find it no easy task to vindicate their conduct.

It may be alledged, and perhaps justly, that he was petulant and contemptuous; that he more frequently reproached his subscribers for not giving him more, than thanked them for what he received; but it is to be remembered that this con-

duct, and this is the worst charge that can be drawn up against him, did them no real injury; and that it therefore ought rather to have been pitied than resented, at least the resentment it might provoke ought to have been generous and manly; epithets which his conduct will hardly deserve that starves the man whom he has persuaded to put himself into his power.

It might have been reasonably demanded by Savage, that they should, before they had taken away what they promised, have replaced him in his former state; that they should have taken no advantages from the situation to which the appearance of their kindness had reduced him, and that he should have been recalled to London before he was abandoned: he might justly represent, that he ought to have been considered as a lion in the toils, and demand to be released before the dogs should be loosed upon him.

He endeavoured, indeed, to release himself, and, with an intent to return to London went to Bristol, where a repetition of the kindness which he had formerly found invited him to stay. He was not only caressed and treated, but had a collection made for him of about thirty pounds, with which it had been happy if he had immediately departed for London; but his negligence did not suffer him to consider that such proofs of kindness were not often to be expected, and that this ardour of benevolence was

in a great degree the effect of novelty, and might, probably, be every day less; and therefore he took no care to improve the happy time, but was encouraged by one favour to hope for another, till at length generosity was exhausted, and officiousness wearied.

Another part of his misconduct was the practice of prolonging his visits to unseasonable hours, and disconcerting all the families into which he was admitted. This was an error in a place of commerce which all the charms of his conversation could not compensate; for what trader would purchase such airy satisfaction by the loss of solid gain? which must be the consequence of midnight merriment, as those hours which were gained at night were generally lost in the morning.

Thus Mr. Savage, after the curiosity of the inhabitants was gratified, found the number of his friends daily decreasing, perhaps without suspecting for what reason their conduct was altered; for he still continued to harrass with his nocturnal intrusions those that yet countenanced him, and admitted him into their houses.

But he did not spend all the time of his residence at Bristol in visits or at taverns, for he sometimes returned to his studies, and began several considerable designs. When he felt an inclination to write, he always retired from the knowledge of his friends, and lay hid in an obscure part of the suburbs till he

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found himself again desirous of company, to which it is likely that intervals of absence made him more welcome.

He was always full of his design of returning to London to bring his tragedy upon the stage; but having neglected to depart with the money that was raised for him, he could not afterwards procure a sum sufficient to defray the expences of his journey; nor perhaps would a fresh supply have had any other effect than, by putting immediate pleasures in his power, to have driven the thoughts of his journey out of his mind.

While he was thus spending the day in contriving a scheme for the morrow, distress stole upon him by imperceptible degrees. His conduct had already wearied some of those who were at first enamoured of his conversation: but he might, perhaps, still have devolved to others, whom he might have entertained with equal success, had not the decay of his clothes made it no longer consistent with their vanity to admit him to their tables, or to associate with him in public places. He now began to find every man from home at whose house he called, and was therefore no longer able to procure the necessaries of life, but wandered about the town slighted and neglected in quest of a dinner which he did not always obtain.

To complete his misery he was pursued by the officers for small debts which he had contracted,

and was therefore obliged to withdraw from the small number of friends from whom he had still reason to hope for favours. His custom was to lie in bed the greatest part of the day, and to go out in the dark with the utmost privacy, and after having paid his visit return again before morning to his lodging, which was in the garret of an obscure inn.

Being thus excluded on one hand, and confined on the other, he suffered the utmost extremities of poverty, and often fasted so long that he was seized with faintness, and had lost his appetite, not being able to bear the smell of meat till the action of his stomach was restored by a cordial.

In this distress he received a remittance of five pounds from London, with which he provided himself a decent coat, and determined to go to London, but unhappily spent his money at a favourite tavern. Thus was he again confined to Bristol, where he was every day hunted by bailiffs. In this exigence he once more found a friend, who sheltered him in his house, though at the usual inconveniencies with which his company was attended; for he could neither be persuaded to go to bed in the night nor to rise in the day.

It is observable that in these various scenes of misery he was always disengaged and cheerful: he at some times pursued his studies, and at others continued or enlarged his epistolary correspondence, nor was he ever so far dejected as to endeavour to

procure an increase of his allowance by any other methods than accusations and reproaches.

He had now no longer any hopes of assistance from his friends at Bristol, who, as merchants, and, by consequence, sufficiently studious of profit, cannot be supposed to have looked with much compassion upon negligence and extravagance, or to think any excellence equivalent to a fault of such consequence as neglect of economy. It is natural to imagine that many of those who would have relieved his real wants were discouraged from the exertion of their benevolence by observation of the use which was made of their favours, and conviction that relief would only be momentary, and that the same necessity would quickly return.

At last he quitted the house of his friend, and returned to his lodging at the inn, still intending to set out in a few days for London; but on the 10th of January 1742-3, having been at supper with two of his friends, he was, at his return to his lodgings, arrested for a debt of about eight pounds, which he owed at a coffee-house, and conducted to the house of a sheriff's officer. The account which he gives of this misfortune, in a letter to one of the gentlemen with whom he had supped, is too remarkable to be omitted.

"It was not a little unfortunate for me that I
"spent yesterday's evening with you, because the
"hour hindered me from entering on my new lodg-

"ing; however I have now got one, but such an "one as, I believe, no body would choose.

"I was arrested at the suit of Mrs. Read just as "I was going up stairs to bed at Mr. Bowyer's, "but taken in so private a manner that I believe no "body at The White Lyon is apprised of it. "Though I let the officers know the strength (or "rather weakness) of my pocket, yet they treated "me with the utmost civility: and even when they "conducted me to confinement, it was in such a "manner that I verily believe I could have escaped, "which I would rather be ruined than have done, "notwithstanding the whole amount of my finan-"ces was but three-pence halfpenny.

"In the first place, I must insist that you will "industriously conceal this from Mrs. S—s, be-"cause I would not have her good nature suffer that "pain which, I know, she would be apt to feel on "this occasion.

"Next I conjure you, dear Sir! by all the ties "of friendship, by no means to have one uneasy "thought on my account, but to have the same "pleasantry of countenance and unruffled serenity "of mind which (God be praised!) I have in this, "and have had in a much severer calamity. Fur-"thermore, I charge you, if you value my friend-"ship as truly as I do yours, not to utter, or even "harbour, the least resentment against Mrs. Read. "I believe she has ruined me, but I freely forgive

" her; and (though I will never more have any " intimacy with her) would at a due distance rather do her an act of good than ill will. Lastly, " (pardon the expression) I absolutely command " you not to offer me any pecuniary assistance, " nor to attempt getting me any from any one of " your friends. At another time, or on any other " occasion, you may, dear friend! be well assured I would rather write to you in the submissive " style of a request than that of a peremptory command.

" However, that my truly valuable friend may " not think I am too proud to ask a favour, let " me entreat you to let me have your boy to attend " me for this day, not only for the sake of saving " me the expence of porters, but for the delivery of " some letters to people whose names I would not " have known to strangers.

" The civil treatment I have thus far met from " those whose prisoner I am, makes me thankful " to the Almighty that, tho' he has thought fit to " visit me (on my birth-night) with affliction, yet " (such is his great goodness!) my affliction is not " without alleviating circumstances. I murmur " not but am all resignation to the divine will. As " to the world, I hope that I shall be endued by " Heaven with that presence of mind, that serene " dignity in misfortune, that constitutes the character of a true nobleman; a dignity far beyond

"that of coronets; a nobility arising from the just "principles of philosophy, refined and exalted by "those of christianity."——

He continued five days at the officer's, in hopes that he should be able to procure bail, and avoid the necessity of going to prison. The state in which he passed his time, and the treatment which he received, are very justly expressed by him in a letter which he wrote to a friend*: "The whole day," says he, "has been employed in various peoples' "filling my head with their foolish chymerical "systems, which has obliged me coolly (as far as "nature will admit) to digest and accommodate "myself to every different person's way of thinking; "hurried from one wild system to another, till it "has quite made a chaos of my imagination, and "nothing done——promised——disappointed—— "ordered to send every hour from one part of the "town to the other."——

When his friends, who had hitherto caressed and applauded, found that to give bail and pay the debt was the same, they all refused to preserve him from a prison at the expence of eight pounds; and therefore after having been for some time at the officers house "at an immense expence," as he observes in his letter, he was at length removed to Newgate.

This expence he was enabled to support by the generosity of Mr. Nash at Bath, who, upon recei-

ving from him an account of his condition, immediately sent him five guineas, and promised to promote his subscription at Bath with all his interest.

By his removal to Newgate he obtained at least a freedom from suspence, and rest from the disturbing vicissitudes of hope and disappointment; he now found that his friends were only companions, who were willing to share his gaiety but not to partake of his misfortunes, and therefore he no longer expected any assistance from them.

It must, however, be observed of one gentleman; that he offered to release him by paying the debt, but that Mr. Savage would not consent, I suppose, because he thought he had been before too burthensome to him.

He was offered, by some of his friends, that a collection should be made for his enlargement; but he "treated the proposal," and declared, "that he "should again treat it with disdain. As to writing "any mendicant letters he had too high a spirit, "and determined only to write to some ministers "of state to try to regain his pension."

He continued to complain of those that had sent him into the country, and objected to them, that he had "lost the profits of his play which had been fi-"nished three years;" and in another letter declares his resolution to publish a pamphlet, that the world might know how "he had been used."

This pamphlet was never written, for he in a very short time recovered his usual tranquillity, and cheerfully applied himself to more inoffensive studies. He indeed steadily declared, that he was promised a yearly allowance of fifty pounds and never received half the sum; but he seemed to resign himself to that as well as to other misfortunes, and lose the remembrance of it in his amusements and employments.

The cheerfulness with which he bore his confinement appears from the following letter, which he wrote January the 30th, to one of his friends in London:

"I now write to you from my confinement in "Newgate, where I have been ever since Monday "last was se'ennight, and where I enjoy myself "with much more tranquillity than I have known "for upwards of a twelvemonth past, having a "room entirely to myself, and pursuing the amusement of my poetical studies uninterrupted, and "agreeable to my mind. I thank the Almighty "I am now all collected in myself; and though "my person is in confinement my mind can expatiate on ample and useful subjects with all the "freedom imaginable. I am now more conversant with the Nine than ever; and if, instead of "a Newgate-bird, I may be allowed to be a bird "of the Muses, I assure you, Sir, I sing very "freely in my cage; sometimes indeed in the

"plaintive notes of the nightingale, but at others "in the cheerful strains of the lark."——

In another letter he observes, that he ranges from one subject to another, without confining himself to any particular task, and that he was employed one week upon one attempt, and the next upon another.

Surely the fortitude of this man deserves, at least, to be mentioned with applause; and whatever faults may be imputed to him, the virtue of suffering well cannot be denied him. The two powers which, in the opinion of Epictetus, constituted a wise man, are those of bearing and forbearing, which cannot be affirmed to have been equally possessed by Savage; and indeed the want of one obliged him very frequently to practise the other.

He was treated by Mr. Dagg, the keeper of the prison, with great humanity; was supported by him at his own table without any certainty of recompence, had a room to himself, to which he could at any time retire from all disturbance, was allowed to stand at the door of the prison, and sometimes taken out into the fields; so that he suffered fewer hardships in prison than he had been accustomed to undergo in the greatest part of his life.

The keeper did not confine his benevolence to a gentle execution of his office, but made some over-

turns to the creditor for his release, but without effect; and continued, during the whole time of his imprisonment, to treat him with the utmost tenderness and civility.

Virtue is undoubtedly most laudable in that state which makes it most difficult, and therefore the humanity of a gaoler certainly deserves this public attestation; and the man whose heart has not been hardened by such an employment may be justly proposed as a pattern of benevolence. If an inscription was once engraved to the "honest toll-gatherer," less honour ought not to be paid, "to the tender gaoler."

Mr. Savage very frequently received visits, and sometimes presents, from his acquaintances, but they did not amount to a subsistence, for the greater part of which he was indebted to the generosity of this keeper; but these favour, however they might endear to him the particular persons from whom he received them, were very far from impressing upon his mind any advantageous ideas of the people of Bristol, and therefore he thought he could not more properly employ himself in prison than in writing a poem called "London and Bristol delineated."

When he had brought this poem to its present state, which, without considering the chasm, is not perfect, he wrote to London an account of his design, and informed his friend that he was deter-

mined to print it with his name, but enjoined him not to communicate his intention to his Bristol acquaintance: the gentleman, surprized at his resolution, endeavoured to dissuade him from publishing it, at least from prefixing his name, and declared that he could not reconcile the injunction of secrecy with his resolution to own it at its first appearance. To this Mr. Savage returned an answer, agreeable to his character in the following terms:

" I received your's this morning, and not without a little surprize at the contents. To answer a question with a question you ask me concerning London and Bristol, Why will I add delineated? Why did Mr. Woolaston add the same word to his Religion of Nature? I suppose it was his will and pleasure to add it in his case, and it is mine to do so in my own. You are pleased to tell me that you understand not why secrecy is enjoined, and yet I intend to set my name to it. My answer is—I have my private reasons, which I am not obliged to explain to any one. You doubt my friend Mr. S——— would not approve of it—And what is it to me whether he does or not? Do you imagine that Mr. S——— is to dictate to me? If any man who calls himself my friend, should assume such an air, I would spurn at his friendship with contempt. You say I seem to think so by

"not letting him know it.—And suppose I do, "what then? perhaps I can give reasons for that "disapprobation very foreign from what you "would imagine. You go on in saying, Suppose I should not put my name to it—My answer "is, that I will not suppose any such thing, "being determined to the contrary; neither, Sir, "would I have you suppose that I applied to you "for want of another press, nor would I have you "imagine that I owe Mr. S——— obligations "which I do not."

Such was his imprudence, and such his obstinate adherence to his own resolutions, however absurd. A prisoner! supported by charity! and, whatever insults he might have received during the latter part of his stay in Bristol, once caressed, esteemed, and presented with a liberal collection, he could forget on a sudden his danger and his obligations to gratify the petulance of his wit, or the eagerness of his resentment, and published a satire, by which he might reasonably expect that he should alienate those who then supported him, and provoke those whom he could neither resist nor escape.

This resolution, from the execution of which it is probable that only his death could have hindered him, is sufficient to shew how much he disregarded all considerations that opposed his present passions, and how readily he hazarded all future advantages

for any immediate gratifications. Whatever was his predominant inclination, neither hope nor fear hindered him from complying with it, nor had opposition any other effect than to heighten his ardour, and irritate his vehemence.

This performance was, however, laid aside while he was employed in soliciting assistance from several great persons, and one interruption succeeding another hindered him from supplying the chasm, and perhaps from retouching the other parts, which he can hardly be imagined to have finished in his own opinion: for it is very unequal, and some of the lines are rather inserted to rhyme to others than to support or improve the sense; but the first and last parts are worked up with great spirit and elegance.

His time was spent in the prison, for the most part, in study or in receiving visits; but sometimes he descended to lower amusements, and diverted himself in the kitchen with the conversation of the criminals; for it was not pleasing to him to be much without company; and though he was very capable of a judicious choice, he was often contented with the first that offered: for this he was sometimes reproved by his friends, who found him surrounded with felons; but the reproof was on that, as on other occasions, thrown away; he continued to gratify himself, and to set very little value on the opinion of others.

But here, as in every other scene of his life, he made use of such opportunities as occurred of benefiting those who were more miserable than himself, and was always ready to perform any offices of humanity to his fellow-prisoners.

He had now ceased from corresponding with any of his subscribers, except one, who yet continued to remit him the twenty pounds a-year which he had promised him, and by whom it was expected that he would have been in a very short time enlarged, because he had directed the keeper to inquire after the state of his debts.

However, he took care to enter his name according to the form of the court, that the creditor might be obliged to make him some allowance if he was continued a prisoner, and when on that occasion he appeared in the hall was treated with very unusual respect.

But the resentment of the City was afterwards raised by some accounts that had been spread of the satire, and he was informed that some of the merchants intended to pay the allowance which the law required, and to detain him a prisoner at their own expence. This he treated as an empty menace, and perhaps might have hastened the publication, only to shew how much he was superior to their insults, had not all his schemes been suddenly destroyed.

When he had been six months in prison, he received from one of his friends *, in whose kindness he had the greatest confidence, and on whose assistance he chiefly depended, a letter that contained a charge of very atrocious ingratitude, drawn up in such terms as sudden resentment dictated. Mr. Savage returned a very solemn protestation of his innocence, but, however, appeared much disturbed at the accusation. Some days afterwards he was seized with a pain in his back and side, which, as it was not violent, was not suspected to be dangerous: but, growing daily more languid and dejected, on the 25th of July he confined himself to his room, and a fever seized his spirits. The symptoms grew every day more formidable, but his condition did not enable him to procure any assistance. The last time that the keeper saw him was on July the 31st 1743, when Savage, seeing him at his bedside, said, with an uncommon earnestness, "I have something to say to you, Sir;" but, after a pause, moved his hand in a melancholy manner, and finding himself unable to recollect what he was going to communicate, said, "'Tis gone!" The keeper soon after left him, and the next morning he died. He was buried in the churchyard of St. Peter at the expence of the keeper.

* Mr. Pope.

Such were the life and death of Richard Savage, a man equally distinguished by his virtues and vices, and at once remarkable for his weaknesses and abilities.

He was of a middle stature, of a thin habit of body, a long visage, coarse features, and melancholy aspect; of a grave and manly deportment, a solemn dignity of mien, but which, upon a nearer acquaintance softened into an engaging easiness of manners. His walk was slow, and his voice tremulous and mournful. He was easily excited to smiles, but very seldom provoked to laughter.

His mind was in an uncommon degree vigorous and active; his judgment was accurate, his apprehension quick, and his memory so tenacious, that he was frequently observed to know what he had learned from others in a short time better than those by whom he was informed, and could frequently recollect incidents, with all their combination of circumstances, which few would have regarded at the present time, but which the quickness of his apprehension impressed upon him. He had the peculiar felicity that his attention never deserted him; he was present to every object, and regardful of the most trifling occurrences: he had the art of escaping from his own reflections, and accommodating himself to every new scene.

To this quality is to be imputed the extent of his knowledge, compared with the small time which

he spent in visible endeavours to acquire it. He mingled in cursory conversation with the same steadiness of attention as others apply to a lecture, and, amidst the appearance of thoughtless gaiety, lost no new idea that was started, nor any hint that could be improved: he had therefore made in coffee-houses the same proficiency as in other studies; and it is remarkable that the writings of a Man of little education and little reading have an air of learning, scarcely to be found in any other performances, but which perhaps as often obscures as embellishes them.

His judgment was eminently exact both with regard to writings and to men. The knowledge of life was indeed his chief attainment, and it is not without some satisfaction that I can produce the suffrage of Savage in favour of human nature, of which he never appeared to entertain such odious ideas as some who perhaps had neither his judgment nor experience have published, either in ostentation of their sagacity, vindication of their crimes, or gratification of their malice.

His method of life particularly qualified him for conversation, of which he knew how to practice all the graces. He was never vehement or loud, but at once modest and easy, open and respectful; his language was vivacious and elegant, and equally happy upon grave or humorous subjects. He was generally censured for not knowing when to retire, but

that was not the defect of his judgment, but of his fortune; when he left his company he was frequently to spend the remaining part of the night in the street, or at least was abandoned to gloomy reflections, which it is not strange that he delayed as long as he could, and sometimes forgot that he gave others pain to avoid it himself.

It cannot be said that he made use of his abilities for the direction of his own conduct: an irregular and dissipated manner of life had made him the slave of every passion that happened to be excited by the presence of its object, and that slavery to his passions reciprocally produced a life irregular and dissipated. He was not master of his own motions, nor could promise any thing for the next day.

With regard to his economy, nothing can be added to the relation of his life: he appeared to think himself born to be supported by others, and dispensed from all necessity of providing for himself; he therefore never prosecuted any scheme of advantage, nor endeavoured even to secure the profits which his Writings might have afforded him.

His temper was, in consequence of the dominion of his passions, uncertain and capricious; he was easily engaged, and easily disgusted; but he is accused of retaining his hatred more tenaciously than his benevolence.

He was compassionate both by nature and principle, and always ready to perform offices of huma-

nity; but when he was provoked, and very small offences were sufficient to provoke him, he would prosecute his revenge with the utmost acrimony till his passion had subsided.

His friendship was, therefore, of little value; for, though he was zealous in the support or vindication of those whom he loved, yet it was always dangerous to trust him, because he considered himself as discharged by the first quarrel from all ties of honour or gratitude; and would betray those secrets which, in the warmth of confidence, had been imparted to him. This practice drew upon him an universal accusation of ingratitude; nor can it be denied that he was very ready to set himself free from the load of an obligation; for he could not bear to conceive himself in a state of dependence, his pride being equally powerful with his other passions, and appearing in the form of insolence at one time and of vanity at another. Vanity, the most innocent species of pride, was most frequently predominant. He could not easily leave off when he had once begun to mention himself or his Works, nor ever read his verses without stealing his eyes from the page, to discover in the faces of his audience how they were affected with any favourite passage.

A kinder name than that of Vanity ought to be given to the delicacy with which he was always careful to separate his own merit from every other

man's; and to reject that praise to which he had no claim. He did not forget, in mentioning his performances, to mark every line that had been suggested or amended, and was so accurate as to relate that he owed three words in The Wanderer to the advice of his friends.

His veracity was questioned, but with little reason; his accounts, though not indeed always the same, were, generally, consistent. When he loved any man he suppressed all his faults, and when he had been offended by him concealed all his virtues: but his characters were, generally, true, so far as he proceeded, though it cannot be denied that his partiality might have sometimes the effect of falsehood.

In cases indifferent he was zealous for virtue, truth, and justice: he knew very well the necessity of goodness to the present and future happiness of mankind, nor is there perhaps any writer who has less endeavoured to please by flattering the appetites or perverting the judgment.

As an author, therefore, and he now ceases to influence mankind in any other character, if one piece which he had resolved to suppress be excepted, he has very little to fear from the strictest moral or religious censure: and though he may not be altogether secure against the objections of the critic, it must, however, be acknowledged that his Works are the productions of a genius truly poetical, and

what many writers who have been mose lavishly applauded cannot boast, that they have an original air which has no resemblance of any foregoing writer; that the versification and sentiments have a cast peculiar to themselves, which no man can imitate with success, because what was nature in Savage would in another be affectation. It must be confessed that his descriptions are striking, his images animated, his fictions justly imagined, and his allegories artfully pursued: that his diction is elevated, though sometimes forced, and his numbers sonorous and majestic, though frequently sluggish and incumbered. Of his style the general fault is harshness, and its general excellence is dignity; of his sentiments the prevailing beauty is sublimity, and uniformity the prevailing defect.

For his life, or for his Writings, none who candidly consider his fortune will think an apology either necessary or difficult. If he was not always sufficiently instructed in his subject, his knowledge was at least greater than could have been attained by others in the same state: if his Works were sometimes unfinished, accuracy cannot reasonably be exacted from a man oppressed with want, which he has no hope of relieving but by a speedy publication. The insolence and resentment of which he is accused were not easily to be avoided by a great mind irritated by perpetual hardships, and constrained hourly to return the spurns of Contempt,

and repress the insolence of Prosperity; and vanity may, surely, readily be pardoned in him, to whom life afforded no other comforts than barren praises, and the consciousness of deserving them.

Those are no proper judges of his conduct who have slumbered away their time on the down of affluence; nor will any wise man presume to say, "Had I been in Savage's condition I should have "lived or written better than Savage."

This relation will not be wholly without its use, if those who languish under any part of his sufferings shall be enabled to fortify their patience, by reflecting that they feel only those afflictions from which the abilities of Savage did not exempt him; or those who, in confidence of superior capacities or attainments, disregard the common maxims of life, shall be reminded that nothing will supply the want of prudence; and that negligence and irregularity long continued will make knowledge useless, wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.

TO THOMAS HARRIS, Esq.

PATENTEE OF THE

THEATRE ROYAL, COVENT GARDEN.

SIR,

I BEG leave to inscribe to you the Writings of Mr. Richard Savage, an author whose early love of the drama not the bitterest calamities could depress. His genius and misfortunes have heretofore gained him the protection of a predecessor of your's in the direction of the theatre—Sir Richard Steele, who, like Mr. Harris, possessed an uncommon share of benevolence: he acted as you would have done: he promoted his interest with the utmost zeal, related his misfortunes, extolled his merit, and took all opportunities of recommending him. The unfortunate Savage, in return, would have joined with others in acknowledging your worth and merit in directing the most rational entertainment of an enlightened people. It requires no common exertion of spirit, activity, and abilities, to be competitor for the public favour, with a theatre directed by the greatest dramatic genius our country could ever boast: one assistance you share with that manager, the advice of a numerous group of NewspaperWits and Critics, those infallible judges of every art and

science, who, with a candour and kindness peculiar to themselves, seize every opportunity to mark the most minute mistake of manager and actor. If your feelings and doubts should make you reject the advice of such eminent writers, (who have frequently had the greatest lawyers for their commentators,) I trust you will continue to receive, what I know you ardently wish—the approbation of the public. I am,

SIR,

Your obliged friend,

THE EDITOR.

EPISTLES.

AN EPISTLE

TO THE RIGHT HON.

SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

STILL let low wits, who sense nor honour prize,
Sneer at all gratitude, all truth disguise;
At living worth, because alive, exclaim,
Insult the exil'd, and the dead defame!
Such paint what pity veils in private woes,
And what we see with grief with mirth expose;
Studious to urge—(whom will mean authors spare?)
The child's, the parent's, and the consort's tear;
Unconscious of what pangs the heart may rend,
To lose what they have ne'er deserv'd—a friend.
Such, ignorant of facts, invent, relate,
Expos'd persist, and answer'd still debate;
Such but by foils the clearest lustre see,
And deem aspersing others praising thee.
  Far from these tracks my honest lays aspire,
And greet a gen'rous heart with gen'rous fire.
Truth be my guide! Truth! which thy virtue claims;
This nor the poet nor the patron shames.
When party-minds shall lose contracted views,
And hist'ry question the recording Muse,

'Tis this alone to after-times must shine,
And stamp the poet and his theme divine.
Long has my Muse, from many a mournful cause,
Sung with small pow'r, nor sought sublime applause;
From that great point she now shall urge her scope,
On that fair promise rest her future hope;
Where policy, from state illusion clear,
Can thro' an open aspect shine sincere;
Where Science, Law, and Liberty, depend,
And own the patron, patriot, and the friend;
(That breast to feel, that eye on worth to gaze,
That smile to cherish, and that hand to raise!)
Whose best of hearts her best of thoughts inflame,
Whose joy is bounty, and whose gift is fame.
Where for relief flies Innocence distress'd?
To you, who chase oppression from th' oppress'd;
Who, when complaint to you alone belongs,
Forgive your own tho' not a people's wrongs:
Who still make public property your care,
And thence bid private grief no more despair.
Ask they what state your shelt'ring care shall own?
'Tis youth, 'tis age, the cottage, and the throne:
Nor can the prison 'scape your searching eye,
Your ear still op'ning to the captive's cry.
Nor less was promis'd from thy early skill,
Ere pow'r enforc'd benevolence of will:
To friends refin'd thy private life adher'd,
By thee improving ere by thee preferr'd.

Well hadst thou weigh'd what truth such friends af-
With thee resigning, and with thee restor'd: [ford,
Thou taught'st them all extensive love to bear,
And now mankind with thee their friendships share.
As the rich cloud by due degrees expands,
And show'rs down plenty thick on sundry lands,
Thy spreading worth in various bounty fell,
Made genius flourish, and made art excel.
How many, yet deceiv'd, 'all power oppose,
Their fears increasing as decrease their woes;
Jealous of bondage while they freedom gain,
And most oblig'd, most eager to complain?
But well we count our bliss if well we view,
When pow'r oppression not protection grew;
View present ills that punish distant climes,
Or bleed in mem'ry here from ancient times.
Mark first the robe abus'd Religion wore,
Story'd with griefs, and stain'd with human gore!
What various tortures, engines, fires reveal,
Study'd, empow'r'd, and sanctify'd, by zeal?
Stop here, my Muse!—peculiar woes descry,
Bid them in sad succession strike thy eye.
Lo! to her eye the sad succession springs,
She looks, she weeps, and as she weeps she sings!
See the doom'd Hebrew of his stores bereft!
See holy Murder justify the theft!
His ravag'd gold some useless shrine shall raise,
His gems on superstitious idols blaze!

His wife, his babe, deny'd their little home,
Stripp'd, starv'd, unfriended, and unpity'd roam!
Lo! the priest's hand the wafer-god supplies!—
A king by consecrated poison dies!
See Learning range yon' broad ethereal plain
From world to world, and godlike Science gain!
Ah! what avails the curious search sustain'd,
The finish'd toil, the godlike Science gain'd?
Sentenc'd to flames th' expansive wisdom fell,
And truth from Heav'n was sorcery from Hell.
See Reason bid each mystic wile retire,
Strike out new light, and mark!—the wise admire!
Zeal shall such heresy, like Learning, bate,
The same their glory, and the same their fate.
Lo! from sought mercy one his life receives,
Life worse than death that cruel Mercy gives:
The man, perchance, who wealth and honours bore,
Slaves in the mine, or ceaseless strains the oar.
So doom'd are these, and such perhaps our doom,
Own'd we a prince, avert it, Heav'n! from Rome.
Nor private worth alone false Zeal assails;
Whole nations bleed when bigotry prevails.
What are sworn friendships? what are kindred ties?
What's faith with heresy? (the zealot cries.)
See! when war sinks the thund'ring cannons roar,
When wounds, and death, and discord, are no more;
When music bids undreading joys advance,
Swell the soft hour, and turn the swimming dance;

When to crown these the social sparkling bowl
Lifts the cheer'd sense, and pours out all the soul;
Sudden he sends red Massacre abroad,
Faithless to man, to prove his faith to God.
What pure persuasive eloquence denies,
All-drunk with blood, the arguing sword supplies;
The sword, which to th' assassin's hand is giv'n,
Th' assassin's hand!—pronounc'd the hand of Heav'n!
Sex bleeds with sex, and infancy with age;
No rank, no place, no virtue stops his rage:
Shall sword, and flame, and devastation, cease
To please with zeal wild zeal! the God of Peace?
   Nor less abuse has scourg'd the civil state,
When a king's will became a nation's fate.
Enormous pow'r! nor noble nor serene;
Now fierce and cruel; now but wild and mean.
See titles sold to raise th' unjust supply!
Compell'd the purchase! or be fin'd, or buy!
No public spirit, guarded well by laws,
Uncensur'd censures in his country's cause.
See from the merchant forc'd th' unwilling loan!
Who dares deny, or deem his wealth his own?
Denying, see! where dungeon-damps arise,
Diseas'd he pines, and unassisted dies.
Far more than massacre that fate accurst!
As of all deaths the ling'ring is the worst.
   New courts of censure griev'd with new offence,
Tax'd without pow'r, and fin'd without pretence,

Explain'd at will each statute's wrested aim,
Till marks of merit were the marks of shame;
So monstrous!—life was the severest grief,
And the worst death seem'd welcome for relief.
  In vain the subject sought redress from law,
No senate liv'd the partial judge to awe:
Senates were void, and senators confin'd
For the great cause of Nature and Mankind.
Who kings superior to the people own,
Yet prove the law superior to the throne.
  Who can review, without a generous tear,
A Church, a State, so impious, so severe?
A land uncultur'd thro' polemic jars,
Rich!—but with carnage from intestine wars!
The hand of Industry employ'd no more,
And commerce flying to some safer shore;
All property reduc'd, to pow'r a prey,
And Sense and Learning chas'd by Zeal away?
Who honours not each dear departed ghost
That strove for Liberty so won, so lost,
So well regain'd when Godlike William rose,
And first entail'd the blessing George bestows?
May Walpole still the growing triumph raise,
And bid these emulate Eliza's days;
Still serve a prince who, o'er his people great,
As far transcends in virtue as in state!
  The Muse pursues thee to thy rural seat;
Ev'n there shall Liberty inspire retreat.

When solemn cares in flowing wit are drown'd,
And sportive chat, and social laughs go round;
Ev'n then, when pausing mirth begins to fail,
The converse varies to the serious tale;
The tale pathetic speaks some wretch that owes
To some deficient law reliefless woes:
What instant pity warms thy gen'rous breast!
How all the legislator stands confest!
Now springs the hint! 'tis now improv'd to thought!
Now ripe! and now to public welfare brought!
New bills, which regulating means bestow,
Justice preserve, yet soft'ning mercy know:
Justice shall low vexatious wiles decline,
And still thrive most when lawyers most repine;
Justice from jargon shall refin'd appear,
To knowledge thro' our native language clear:
Hence we may learn, no more deceiv'd by law,
Whence wealth and life their best assurance draw.
The freed insolvent, with industrious hand,
Strives yet to satisfy the just demand:
Thus ruthless men, who would his pow'rs restrain,
Oft' what severity would lose obtain.
These, and a thousand gifts, thy thought acquires,
Which Liberty benevolent inspires.
From Liberty the fruits of law increase,
Plenty, and joy, and all the arts of peace.
Abroad the merchant, while the tempests rave,
Advent'rous sails, nor fears the wind and wave;

At home, untir'd, we find th' auspicious hand
With flocks, and herds, and harvests, bless the land:
While there the peasant glads the grateful soil,
Here mark the shipwright, there the mason toil,
Hew, square, and rear, magnificent the stone,
And give our oaks a glory not their own!
What life demands by this obeys her call,
And added elegance consummates all.
Thus stately cities, statelier navies rise,
And spread our grandeur under distant skies.
From Liberty each nobler science sprung,
A Bacon brighten'd, and a Spenser sung;
A Clarke and Locke new tracks of truth explore,
And Newton reaches heights unreach'd before.

What Trade sees property, that wealth maintain
Which Industry no longer dreads to gain;
What tender conscience kneels with fears resign'd,
Enjoys her worship, and avows her mind;
What genius now from want to fortune climbs,
And to safe science every thought sublimes;
What Royal Pow'r, from his superior state,
Sees public happiness his own create,
But kens those patriot-souls to which he owes
Of old each source whence now each blessing flows?
And if such spirits from their heav'n descend,
And, blended, flame to point one glorious end;
Flame from one breast, and thence on Britain shine,
What love, what praise, O Walpole! then is thine?

TO MR. JOHN DYER, A PAINTER,

Advising him to draw a certain

NOBLE AND ILLUSTRIOUS PERSON.

Occasioned by seeing his

PICTURE OF THE CELEBRATED CLIO*.

FORGIVE an artless, an officious friend,
Weak when I judge, but willing to commend;
Fall'n as I am, by no kind fortune rais'd,
Depress'd, obscur'd, unpity'd, and unprais'd;
Yet when these well-known features I peruse,
Some warmth awakes—some embers of a Muse.
Ye Muses, Graces, and ye Loves! appear;
Your queen, your Venus, and your Clio, is here;
In such pure fires her rising thoughts refine,
Her eyes with such commanding sweetness shine,
Such vivid tinctures sure thro' ether glow,
Stain summer clouds, or gild the wat'ry bow;
If life Pygmalion's iv'ry fav'rite fir'd,
Sure some enamour'd god this draught inspir'd!
Or, if you rashly caught Promethean flame,
Shade the sweet theft, and mar the beauteous frame!
Yet if those cheering lights the prospect fly,
Ah!—let no pleasing view the loss supply:

* See Dyer's Poems.

Some dreary den, some desert waste prepare,
Wild as my thoughts, or dark as my despair.
But still, my Friend! still the sweet object stays,
Still stream your colours rich with Clio's rays!
Sure at each kindling touch your canvass glows!
Sure the full form, instinct with spirit grows!
Let the dull artist puzzling rules explore,
Dwell on the face, and gaze the features o'er;
You eye the soul—there genuine nature find;
You thro' the meaning muscles strike the mind.
Nor can one view such boundless pow'r confine,
All Nature opens to an art like thine!
Now rural scenes in simple grandeur rise,
Vales, hills, lawns, lakes, and vineyards, feast our eyes!
Now halcyon Peace a smiling aspect wears!
Now the red scene with war and ruin glares!
Here Britain's fleets o'er Europe's seas preside!
There long-lost cities rear their ancient pride!
You from the grave can half redeem the slain,
And bid great Julius charm the world again;
Mark out Pharsalia's, mark out Munda's fray,
And image all the honours of the day.
But if new glories most our warmth excite,
If toils untry'd to noblest aims invite,
Would you in envy'd pomp unrivall'd reign,
Oh! let Horatius grace the canvas plain;
His form might ev'n idolatry create,
In lineage, titles, wealth, and worth, elate:

Empires to him might virgin honours owe,
From him arts, arms, and laws, new influence know:
For him kind suns on fruits and grains shall shine,
And future gold lie rip'ning in the mine:
For him fine marble in the quarry lies,
Which in due statues to his fame shall rise.
Thro' those bright features Cæsar's spirit trace,
Each conqu'ring sweetness, each imperial grace;
All that is soft, or eminently great,
In love, in war, in knowledge, or in state.
Thus shall your colours like his worth amaze;
Thus shall you charm, enrich'd with Clio's praise:
Clear, and more clear, your golden genius shines,
While my dim lamp of life obscure declines:
Dull'd in damp shades it wastes, unseen, away,
While yours, triumphant, grows one blaze of day.

AN EPISTLE TO MR. JOHN DYER,

AUTHOR OF GRONGAR HILL.

In answer to his from the country *.

Now various birds in melting concert sing,
And hail the beauty of the op'ning spring;
Now to thy dreams the nightingale complains,
Till the lark wakes thee with her cheerful strains;
Wakes, in thy verse and friendship, ever kind!
Melodious comfort to my jarring mind.

* See Dyer's Poems.

Oh! could my soul thro' depths of knowledge see,
Could I read Nature and mankind like thee,
I should o'ercome or bear the shocks of Fate,
And ev'n draw envy to the humblest state.
Thou canst raise honour from each ill event,
From shocks gain vigour, and from want content.
Think not light poetry my life's chief care;
The Muse's mansion is at best but air;
But if more solid works my meaning forms,
Th' unfinish'd structures fall by Fortune's storms!
Oft' have I said we falsely those accuse
Whose godlike souls life's middle state refuse.
Self-love, I cry'd, there seeks ignoble rest;
Care sleeps not calm when millions wake unblest;
Mean let me shrink, or spread sweet shade o'er all,
Low as the shrub, or as the cedar tall!—
'Twas vain! 'twas wild!—I sought the middle state,
And found the good, and found the truly great.
Tho' verse can never give my soul her aim,
Tho' action only claims substantial fame;
Tho' Fate denies what my proud wants require,
Yet grant me, Heav'n! by knowledge to aspire.
Thus to inquiry let me prompt the mind,
Thus clear dimm'd Truth, and bid her bless mankind;
From the pierc'd orphan thus draw shafts of grief,
Arm Want with patience, and teach Wealth relief!
To serve lov'd Liberty inspire my breath!
Or, if my life be useless, grant me death;

For he who useless is in life survey'd,
Burthens that world his duty bids him aid.
Say, what have honours to allure the mind,
Which he gains most who least has serv'd mankind?
Titles, when worn by fools, I dare despise,
Yet they claim homage when they crown the wise.
When high distinction marks deserving heirs,
Desert still dignifies the mark it wears.
But who to birth alone would honours owe?
Honours, if true, from seeds of merit grow:
Those trees with sweetest charms invite our eyes,
Which from our own ingraftment fruitful rise.
Still we love best what we with labour gain,
As the child's dearer for the mother's pain.
The great I would not envy nor deride,
Nor stoop to swell a vain superior's pride,
Nor view an equal's hope with jealous eyes,
Nor crush the wretch beneath who wailing lies.
My sympathizing breast his grief can feel,
And my eye weep the wound I cannot heal.
Ne'er among friendships let me sow debate,
Nor by another's fall advance my state;
Nor misuse wit against an absent friend:
Let me the virtues of a foe defend!
In wealth and want true minds preserve their weight;
Meek tho' exalted, tho' disgrac'd elate;
Gen'rous and grateful, wrong'd or help'd they live;
Grateful to serve, and gen'rous to forgive.

This may they learn who close thy life attend,
Which, dear in mem'ry, still instructs thy friend:
Tho' cruel distance bars my grosser eye,
My soul, clear sighted, draws thy virtue nigh;
Thro' her deep woe that quick'ning comfort gleams,
And lights up fortitude with friendship's beams.

VERSES TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

WITH THE TRAGEDY OF SIR THOMAS OVERBURY,

Expecting him to correct it.

I.

As the soul, stripp'd of mortal clay,
Grows all divinely fair;
And boundless roves the Milky Way,
And views sweet prospects there;

II.

This hero, clogg'd with drossy lines,
By thee new vigour tries;
As thy correcting hand refines,
Bright scenes around him rise.

III.

Thy touch brings the wish'd stone to pass
So sought, so long foretold;
It turns polluted lead or brass
At once to purest gold,

THE FRIEND.

AN EPISTLE TO AARON HILL, ESQ.

O MY lov'd Hill! O thou by Heav'n design'd
To charm, to mend, and to adorn mankind!
To thee my hopes, fears, joys, and sorrows tend,
Thou brother, father, dearer yet!—thou Friend!
If worldly friendships of cement divide
As int'rests vary, or as whims preside;
If leagues of Lux'ry borrow Friendship's light,
Or leagues subversive of all social right;
O say, my Hill! in what propitious sphere
Gain we the Friend, pure, knowing, and sincere?
'Tis where the worthy and the wise retire;
There Wealth may learn its use, may Love inspire;
There may young Worth the noblest end obtain,
In want may friends, in friends may knowledge gain,
In knowledge bliss; for wisdom virtue finds,
And brightens mortal to immortal minds.
Kind then my wrongs, if love like yours succeed,
For you, like Virtue, are a friend indeed!
Oft' when you saw my youth wild error know,
Reproof, soft hinted, taught the blush to glow.
Young and unform'd, you first my genius rais'd,
Just smil'd when faulty, and when mod'rate prais'd.
Me shunn'd, me ruin'd, such a Mother's rage!
You sung, till Pity wept o'er ev'ry page.

You call'd my lays and wrongs to early fame;
Yet, yet th' obdurate mother felt no shame.
Pierc'd as I was, your counsel soften'd care,
To ease turn'd anguish, and to hope despair.
The man who never wound afflictive feels,
He never felt the balmy worth that heals.
Welcome the wound when bless'd with such relief!
For deep is felt the Friend when felt in grief.
From you shall never, but with life, remove
Aspiring genius, condescending love.
When some with cold superior looks redress,
Relief seems insult, and confirms distress;
You! when you view the man with wrongs besieg'd,
While warm you act th' obliger seem th' oblig'd.
All-winning, mild to each of lowly state;
To equals free, unservile to the great;
Greatness you honour, when by worth acquir'd;
Worth is by worth in ev'ry rank admir'd.
Greatness you scorn when titles insult speak;
Proud to vain Pride, to honour'd Meekness meek.
That worthless bliss which others court you fly;
That worthy woe they shun attracts your eye.
But shall the Muse resound alone your praise?
No—let the public Friend exalt her lays!
O trace that Friend with me!--he's your's--he's mine!
The world's—beneficent behold him shine!
Is wealth his sphere? If riches, like a tide,
From either India pour their golden pride;

Rich in good works, him others' wants employ;
He gives the widow's heart to sing for joy.
To orphans, pris'ners, shall his bounty flow,
The weeping family of Want and Woe.
Is knowledge his? Benevolently great,
In leisure active, and in care sedate;
What aid his little wealth perchance denies,
In each hard instance his advice supplies.
With modest truth he sets the wand'ring right,
And gives religion pure primeval light;
In love diffusive, as in light refin'd,
The lib'ral emblem of his Maker's mind.
Is pow'r his orb? He then, like pow'r divine,
On all, tho' with a varied ray, will shine.
Ere pow'r was his, the man he once carest
Meets the same faithful smile and mutual breast:
But asks his friend some dignity of state;
His friend, unequal to th' incumbent weight?
Asks it a stranger, one whom parts inspire
With all a people's welfare would require?
His choice admits no pause; his gift will prove
All private well absorb'd in public love.
He shields his country when for aid she calls;
Or, should she fall, with her he greatly falls:
But as proud Rome, with guilty conquest crown'd,
Spread slav'ry, death, and desolation, round,
Should e'er his country for dominion's prize
Against the sons of men a faction rise,

Glory in her's is in his eye disgrace:
The Friend of truth, the Friend of human race,
Thus to no one, no sect, no clime, confin'd,
His boundless love embraces all mankind:
And all their virtues in his life are known,
And all their joys and sorrows are his own!
These are the lights where stands the friend confest;
This, this the spirit which informs thy breast.
Thro' Fortune's cloud thy genuine worth can shine;
What wouldst thou not were wealth and greatness thine?

TO THE EXCELLENT MIRANDA,

CONSORT OF AARON HILL, ESQ.

On reading her Poems.

Each soft'ning charm of Clio's smiling song,
Montague's soul, which shines divinely strong,
These blend, with graceful ease, to form thy rhyme,
Tender yet chaste, sweet-sounding yet sublime.
Wisdom and wit have made thy works their care,
Each passion glows refin'd by precept there:
To fair Miranda's form each Grace is kind;
The Muses and the Virtues tune thy mind.

TO MRS. ELIZA HAYWOOD,

ON HER NOVEL CALLED

THE RASH RESOLVE.

Doom'd to a fate which damps the poet's flame,
A Muse unfriended greets thy rising name;
Unvers'd in envy's or in flatt'ry's phrase,
Greatness she flies, yet merit claims her praise;
Nor will she at her withering wreath repine,
But smile, if Fame and Fortune cherish thine.
The Sciences in thy sweet genius charm,
And with their strength thy sex's softness arm.
In thy full figures painting's force we find;
As music fires, thy language lifts the mind:
Thy pow'r gives form, and touches into life
The passions imag'd in their bleeding strife:
Contrasted strokes true art and fancy show,
And lights and shades in lively mixture flow.
Hope attacks Fear, and Reason, Love's control,
Jealousy wounds, and Friendship heals the soul:
Black Falsehood wears bright Gallantry's disguise,
And the gilt cloud enchants the fair one's eyes.
Thy dames in grief and frailties lovely shine,
And when most mortal half appear divine.
If, when some godlike fav'rite passion sways,
The willing heart too fatally obeys,

Great minds lament what cruel censure blames,
And ruin'd virtue gen'rous pity claims.
Eliza still impaint Love's powerful queen!
Let love, soft love, exalt each swelling scene.
Arm'd with keen wit, in Fame's wide lists advance;
Spain yields in fiction, in politeness France.
Such orient light as the first poets knew
Flames from thy thought, and brightens ev'ry view!
A strong, a glorious, a luxuriant fire,
Which warms cold wisdom into wild desire!
Thy fable glows so rich thro' ev'ry page,
What moral's force can the fierce heat asswage?
And yet—but say if ever doom'd to prove
The sad, the dear, perplexities of love!
Where seeming transport softens ev'ry pain,
Where fancy'd freedom waits the winning chain;
Varying from pangs to visionary joys,
Sweet is the fate, and charms as it destroys!
Say then—if love to sudden rage gives way,
Will the soft passion not resume its sway?
Charming and charm'd, can Love from Love retire?
Can a cold convent quench th' unwilling fire?
Precept, if human, may our thoughts refine;
More we admire, but cannot prove divine.

AN EPISTLE TO MRS. OLDFIELD,

OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL.

WHILE to your charms unequal verse I raise,
Aw'd I admire and tremble as I praise;
Here Art and Genius new refinement need,
List'ning they gaze, and as they gaze recede!
Can Art or Genius, or their pow'rs combin'd,
But from corporeal organs sketch the mind?
When sound embody'd can with shape surprise,
The Muse may emulate your voice and eyes.
  Mark, rival arts perfection's point pursue!
Each rivals each but to excel in you!
The bust and medal bear the meaning face,
And the proud statue adds the posture's grace;
Imag'd at length, the bury'd Heroine, known,
Still seems to wound, to smile or frown in stone!
As art would art, or metal stone surpass,
Her soul strikes, gleaming thro' Corinthian brass!
Serene the saint in smiling silver shines,
And cherubs weep in gold o'er sainted shrines!
If long-lost forms from Raphael's pencil glow,
Wondrous in warmth the mimic colours flow;
Each look, each attitude, new grace displays;
Your voice and motion life and music raise.
  Thus Cleopatra in your charms refines;
She lives, she speaks, with force improv'd she shines!

Fair, and mroe fair, you ev'ry grace transmit;
Love, learning, beauty, elegance, and wit.
Cæsar, the world's unrival'd master, fir'd,
In her imperial soul his own admir'd!
Philippi's victor wore her winning chain,
And felt not empire's loss in Beauty's gain.
Could the pale heroes your bright influence know
Or catch the silver accents as they flow,
Drawn from dark rest by your enchanting strain,
Each shade were lur'd to life and love again.
Say, sweet Inspirer! were each annal known,
What living greatness shines there not your own!
If the griev'd Muse by some lov'd empress rose,
New strength, new grace, it to your influence owes
If Pow'r by war distinguish'd height reveals,
Your nobler pride the wounds of Fortune heals.
Then could an empire's cause demand your care,
The soul that justly thinks would greatly dare.
Long has feign'd Venus mock'd the Muse's prais
You dart, divine Opheka! genuine rays.
Warm thro' those eyes enliv'ning raptures roll,
Sweet thro' each striking feature streams your soul
The soul's bright meanings heighten beauty's fires
Your looks, your thoughts, your deeds, each gra
inspires! [stan
Know, then, if rank'd with monarchs here yo
What Fate declines you from the Muse demand;
Each grace that shone of old in each fam'd fair,
Or may in modern dames refinement wear;